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- Cor. St. Patrick and Union Street.
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- Everitt's Foundry, Brussels Street.
- Cor. Brussels and Hanover Street.
- Cor. Erin and Brunswick Street.
- Cor. Union and Carmichael Street.
- Charleston, opposite Golden Street.
- Cor. Princess and Ontario Street.
- Cor. Prince and Pitt Street.
- Cor. Prince and Pitt Street.
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- Cor. Duke and Sydney Street.
- Cor. Westworth and Princess Street.
- No. 1 Engine House, Queen Street.
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SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

DELIVERED IN

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

BY THE

REV. A. McLEOD STAVELY,

Minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

ST. JOHN, N.B.

BARNES & COMPANY, PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

1878.

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

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MAY -

NOVEMBER.

MAY.

CITY OF ST. JOSEPH
Fire Alarm Telegraph

THE LIBRARY



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BRITISH COLUMBIA

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*From Rev. A. M. L. Stavely.
To Arthur Park. Feb. 3^d. 1879.*
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DELIVERED IN

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK,

BY THE

REV. A. McLEOD STAVELY

Minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.



ST. JOHN, N.B.

BARNES & COMPANY, PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

1878.

Prefatory Note.

THE following pages contain certain Sermons and Addresses published during the last few years, and are now presented in this form in compliance with the wishes of a number of friends whose Libraries were destroyed by the disastrous fire in St. John, on the 20th of June, 1877, and who have expressed an earnest and cordial desire to possess such a Memorial of many happy days and years spent amongst them by their friend and Pastor.

March, 1878.

THE PERPETUITY OF THE GOSPEL.

A SERMON,

INCLUDING

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH,

PREACHED JANUARY 8, 1865.

Correspondence.

ST. JOHN, N. B., *January 11, 1865.*

REV. A. MCLEOD STAVELY:

DEAR SIR,—We, who had the privilege of hearing your Discourse on last Sabbath evening, preached with special reference to the death of your venerated father, the late Rev. WILLIAM JOHN STAVELY, D.D., desire to have it in a permanent form; and therefore request that you will give it for publication, confident that it will do good beyond the bounds of your own congregation.

We are, Dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

JOHN BOYD.
THOS. MACLELLAN.
GEORGE SUFFREN.
ROBERT EWING.
JOHN MILLEN.
WILLIAM DOUGALL.
GEORGE BELL.
JOHN McMASTER.
SAMUEL REID,
JOHN TOLAND.
JAMES DUNBAR.
NEIL MORRISON.
JAMES MILLER.

January 18, 1865.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

I cannot but appreciate the feelings of kindness in which your request is made; and while, from considerations of delicacy, I feel a great measure of hesitation in complying with it, yet, in deference to your wish, and that of others who heard the Discourse, and whose opinion and judgment I likewise respect, it is now given to the press.

I am, very affectionately yours,

A. M. STAVELY.

Messrs. JOHN BOYD,
THOS. MACLELLAN, &c., &c.

THE PERPETUITY OF THE GOSPEL.

1 PETER i, 25 :—"The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

WE are permitted this evening, in the good providence of God, to meet you again in the sanctuary, and to meet some of you here for the first time since the opening of the New Year, that we may raise our *Eben-ezer* of gratitude, and inscribe on it sentiments of thanksgiving and praise. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Let us now, under the enlightening, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, whose presence and blessing we have just implored at the throne of mercy, embrace this renewed opportunity of directing your thoughts to the word of the Lord, that you and I may thus be strong in the grace that is in Christ, and that through the blessing of God on our labours much good may be done amongst us in the name and by the power of His holy child Jesus. "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord God. I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

The verse which we have read as the subject of our present discourse, suggests a theme at once pleasing and profitable, a theme which must ever be precious to all true believers. Seeing then that the Apostle has used great plainness of speech in thus addressing "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," let us imitate his example and follow in his footsteps when we declare unto you, fellow christians and fellow sinners, the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation.

The first part of this text was, as you perceive, originally addressed to the Old Testament church, and is contained in that sublime and beautiful chapter which was just read at the commencement of this service—the fortieth of the

prophecies of Isaiah. He heard a voice. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." The Apostle Peter is inspired to make the same announcement to the New Testament Church. "All flesh is as grass." How expressive is this poetical imagery of the vanity of man in his best estate. God may clothe it in the morning, when fresh with the early dew, in a splendour superior to that of Solomon in all his glory when "he made himself a great chariot of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold," but ere the evening sun goes down the scorching east wind blows, or before the mower's scythe it withers and dies. In like manner all the goodliness of man is as the flower of the field. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.

At this season of the year the voice of nature and the voice of revelation unite with the sublime voice of Providence in giving emphasis to the language of our text. Where is now the grass which only a few weeks ago so richly adorned our hills and valleys with their verdant carpet? Where are now those fragrant flowers which cheered the eye with their beauty and regaled the smell with their perfume? They are gone; and the barren fields and leafless trees and withered branches covered with snow like wool, and hoarfrost as ashes: whilst they remind us of the divine faithfulness in the recurrence of the seasons, and that while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, day and night, summer and winter shall not cease; they remind us, too, that as in the natural world summer succeeds spring, autumn succeeds summer, and winter succeeds autumn—so man passes from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, from life to death. "We all," says Isaiah, "do fade as a leaf," and the genius of uninspired poetry thus improves the similitude.

"Like leaves on trees, the race of man is found—
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;
Another race the following spring supplies;
They fall successive, and successive rise.
So generations in their course decay,
So flourish these when those are passed away."

"Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." "But," saith the Spirit, "the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

Our text contains two propositions. In discoursing from these words, I shall consider—

FIRST. The perpetuity of the gospel here called the word of the Lord, as contrasted with the frailty of man.

SECONDLY. The preaching of the gospel as the appointed means of dispensing the blessings of salvation to the end of time.

I. *It endureth for ever.* Whilst every thing on earth is subject to change and liable to decay, the glorious gospel of the blessed God is like its divine author—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. It is the word of the Lord, a tried word. “His covenant will He not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of His mouth. . . He remembereth His covenant forever, the thoughts of His heart to a thousand generations.” The word of the Lord, the proclamation of mercy to our guilty race, written under the inspiration of the Spirit, endureth for ever. In the adorable purposes of everlasting love from all eternity it pleased the triune Jehovah that the second person of the adorable Trinity, the Son of God, should become the Saviour, and appear in the fulness of time, according to the arrangements of the mediatorial covenant, that by His obedience, sufferings, and death, He might open up a channel through which mercy might flow to guilty man. This salvation, worthy of the God of all grace to devise, and worthy of the Son of God to effect, early became the subject of Scripture prophecy—it was announced in the first promise, prefigured in every type, rejoiced in by every patriarch, foretold by every prophet, and all the dispensations of Providence from age to age during four thousand years were wonderfully overruled to prepare the way for Christ’s coming in the flesh. To Patriarchs and Prophets, to Apostles and Evangelists, God imparted a knowledge of his will, and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are given unto us that we may learn therefrom the doctrines we are to believe and the duties we are to practise in every situation and relation of life. We read in the epistle to Timothy: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished, unto all good works.” On the same subject Peter says: “The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Again, “God spake by his holy servants the prophets.” That which they have written, that which the evangelists have written, remains what it was, what it is,

and what it shall be, till the end of time, and the consummation of all things. We are assured that there never will be any *new* revelation of the will of God to mankind, and that the revelation which we have in the Scriptures never can grow old. "And I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book." (Rev. xxii. 18.)

Year after year may revolve, generation after generation may appear on the theatre of human existence and pass away, all things bright and beautiful on earth may fade; the marble monument, the imperial city, even the pyramids of Egypt, and the most durable works of human art, may mingle with the dust of bygone centuries, yea, the mountains may depart and the everlasting hills be removed, the heavens may be rolled together as a parchment scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein may be burnt up. But *here* is perpetuity. The word of God endureth for ever. Blessed be His name, when patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and evangelists have died, it still lives to guide our feet in the way of peace and salvation, to our heavenly home. Oh, let us receive it, as did some of old, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Pet. i. 23.)

"This lamp from off the everlasting Throne
Mercy brought down; and in the night of time
Stands casting on the dark her gracious bow,
And evermore beseeching men, with tears and earnest sighs,
To read, believe, and live."

II. *It endureth forever, to make us acquainted with the way of life and immortality.*

By some, it is asserted that human reason is of itself sufficient to lead men to all necessary knowledge as to holiness and happiness. It is altogether vain to talk of what human reason might have accomplished, when both the intellectual and the moral powers of man were unimpaired by sin and transgression. It is equally vain to talk of what reason has done or can do in morality or religion in professedly christian countries, because it is aided by divine revelation, shedding light upon the relation which man sustains to his fellow-man and his God. The most distinguished of the heathen philosophers, a Pythagoras, a Plato, and an

Aristotle had no correct views of immortality. Unaided reason might indeed teach Socrates, favoured as he was with some dark glimpses of futurity, to use such language as this. "By and bye," said Socrates to his friends, "you will be saying that Socrates is dead, but Socrates will not be dead. By and bye you will be saying that Socrates is in his coffin, but Socrates will not be in his coffin. By and bye you will be saying: we are going to bury Socrates; but you will not bury Socrates, you will only bury something that belonged to him." It is, however, a question whether the doctrine which he taught concerning the immortality of the soul was not derived from some scattered ray of the light of revelation. But however this may have been we are convinced that those destitute of the gospel, by which life and immortality are brought to light, have no correct idea of the doctrine of a future state, and there is every reason to suppose that of the resurrection of the body they are entirely ignorant.

When the apostle Paul, driven by persecution from Berea, preached at Athens, then one of the most distinguished cities in the world, and not more distinguished for the learning than for the wickedness of its inhabitants—they had the choicest advantages for making the most of human reason, and yet "his spirit was stirred within him"; in other words, he was irritated or provoked because of their idolatry. And no wonder, for if they were wiser than the wisest of the world when worshipping their thirty thousand deities, we may indeed thank that God whom he declared unto them, for what they would have called the *foolishness* of preaching, but which makes us, through the assistance of His Spirit, wise unto salvation. In the Areopagus of Athens certain of the Epicureans and of the Stoics, two celebrated sects of the ancient heathen philosophers, came to hear him: and some said, "What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection." (Acts xvii. 18.) Again at the 32nd verse we are told that "When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." Without occupying time in mentioning other facts which might be adduced, to an almost endless extent, from sacred and profane history, to illustrate what men are without the gospel, we would only observe that, let reason do her best, we nevertheless require that word which liveth and abideth for ever to confirm her conclusions, to make known the fundamental

truths of religion, to reveal the great doctrine of immortality, and to furnish a satisfactory answer to the question, "If a man die shall he live again?" Such an answer as can illuminate our passage through the dark valley when we read in the sunlight of revelation of that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which the Lord hath prepared for them that love him; such an answer as can lead us to say, when the bodies of our christian parents, or children, or relatives or friends are cold in the tomb, and "have no share in all that's done beneath the circuit of the sun," that they still live to eat of the fruit of the tree of life that grows in the midst of the paradise of God, and to drink from the river of eternal pleasure in that state of heavenly felicity into which all those are admitted who have been the faithful friends and followers of Christ. "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

How very beautiful and expressive is the language of the Shorter Catechism, that excellent form of sound words, with which, we believe, most of you have been made acquainted from your earliest childhood, and which we regard as agreeable to the mind of the Spirit, as revealed through the sacred Scriptures: "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies being still united to Christ do rest in their graves till the resurrection." May we not then joyfully exclaim, "Oh grave, where is thy victory? Oh death, where is thy sting?" That God leaves his people, as regards the dissolution of the body, in the same condition as other men; that like them the most honoured, and devoted, and useful of his servants are afflicted; that like them they die, there can be no doubt. "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" Such enquiries have found a negative answer from age to age, during a period of nearly six thousand years. The king of terrors selected his first victim from the Church of God; and since the death of righteous Abel, the second born of the sons of Adam, he has continued his ravages from Adam to Moses, before the giving of the law, and from Moses to the present hour, sweeping one generation after another from the face of the earth. The righteous and the wicked, then, are alike subject to mortality, for all are by nature the children of wrath, and therefore to be cut down by the great destroyer of our race. No sin, no death; and no death, no sin. It is true

that Enoch and Elijah were translated corporeally as well as spiritually, and entered at once on all the glory of heaven without passing through the dark valley; but neither prophets, nor patriarchs, nor apostles, nor saints, nor martyrs furnish any other exception from the universal law, "It is appointed unto men once to die;" and it is not for me, nor for any mortal to assign a reason why such is the general course of the Divine proceedure, since none is given in Scripture more comprehensive than this: "The wages of sin is death." At the scaffold, or the stake, or in the dungeon of the Inquisition, multitudes which cannot be numbered of God's dear saints have many a time in the past history of the Church been consigned by their cruel and blood-thirsty persecutors to death in its most excruciating form—they have had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, and bonds, and imprisonments, and tortures, and death, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. But have they not, when exposed to sufferings almost incredible, witnessed a good confession? Have they not, even amidst the fire and the faggot, and the flame, shewn an unconquerable bravery, an undying fortitude, as worthy imitators of Him who endured the Cross and despised the shame? Their blood has watered the tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; and we sit under its shadow, and eat its pleasant fruit. Oh, let us rejoice that by the contendings of these men of whom the world was not worthy, in New Testament times, there has been transmitted to us that word which we speak, that gospel which we preach, that liberty which we, even in this Province, far, far away from where they suffered, and bled, and died, so fully and freely enjoy to worship the Christian's God. They were cheered amidst all their sore trials, and especially in death itself, with the joyful hope of an endless life: their persecutors might kill their bodies, but they could not touch their souls; and now "they have come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple."

We, brethren, know as certainly as the Patriarch did, that God will bring us to death and to the house appointed for all living. In some way or other, and according to the general law of mortality, the human frame, so fearfully and wonderfully made, must be reduced to its kindred dust. But death is powerless as regards the immortal spirit. It has been robbed of its terrors by the Lord of *life*, who has deprived it of its final power in respect to all those who

obtain salvation through His blood, and death, the end of their natural life, introduces them to the full enjoyment of eternal life. They die to live, and live to die no more. The word of God furnishes the most satisfactory evidence of the existence of the never-dying soul after it leaves this tenement of clay. Our Saviour spake of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as still living, although as regards the body they had been long since dead; thus teaching us as well as the Sadducees, who denied the separate existence of the soul, and affirmed that it perished with the body, the doctrine of a future state of existence. Moses and Elias appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. Our Saviour on the Cross said to the penitent thief: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Stephen committed his departing spirit to the Lord Jesus; and Paul desired to depart that he might be with Christ. We are thus reminded that, now, instead of regarding it as a sentence of wrath passed upon us in God's anger, the christian can meet and welcome death as a messenger of love, cheered by these words of Jesus: "I am the resurrection and the life; whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." It is the christian alone who can rejoice in such a precious promise. The resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of the resurrection of His people; and the same power shall be put forth on their behalf that raised Him from the dead. True, their bodies, with the exception of those who are alive at the second coming of Christ, must moulder in the dust of death; but it is not so certain that the light of the morning will shine brighter and brighter until the sun reaches his meridian splendour, shedding life and light far as the influence of his cheering rays extend; it is not so certain that the grain of wheat which is cast into the ground, although it may die, will afterwards spring up and produce first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear; it is not so certain that the trees which shed their leaves in autumn will bud and blossom and bear fruit in their appointed season; it is not so certain that the desolations of winter will be followed by the verdure, fragrance and loveliness of spring, when the flowers appear on the earth and the time of the singing of birds has come—as that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, and that the dead bodies of God's saints shall be raised from their mouldering urn radiant in all the beauty and freshness of immortal youth: "For when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, they also shall appear with Him in glory." Isaiah, the gospel

prophet, says, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words:"

"Darkness and doubt are now fleeing away;

No longer we rove in conjecture forlorn:

Thus breaks on the traveller, faint and astray,

The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.

See truth, love and mercy, in triumph descending;

All nature arises in Eden's first bloom.

On the cold cheek of death, smiles and roses are blending,

And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

We now come to the second division of the subject.

II. Preaching of the gospel is the appointed means of dispensing the blessings of salvation.

1. *Preaching the gospel is a divine ordinance.* "This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." The term here translated preached is elsewhere rendered *made known, shewn forth, declared*; and as used in the New Testament it signifies the oral delivery of a message from God to man. The Greek word, which literally signifies good news, or glad tidings, is here translated by the word gospel; and to preach the gospel is to proclaim as heralds the great truth which it reveals concerning the method, the only method of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the word we are to preach—the glad tidings we are to proclaim. The holy angels, who are still ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation, do not need such a message; and the angels that sinned and kept not their first estate God hath reserved in chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day. They are not favoured with a revelation of that astonishing mystery of love which has been hid in God from everlasting ages, and is made known unto us in the gospel. For many ages a knowledge of the long promised and long expected Messiah was confined to the Jews. Hence the inspired writer says, "He shewed

his word unto Jacob, his statutes and judgments unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation." But the angel who came to announce to the shepherds who kept watch over their flocks by night on the plains of Bethlehem the birth of the Messiah, said, "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be"—to you, no—"to *all* people: for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." And presently there was a triumphant band of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." When Christ ascended to take possession of that glory which He had with the Father before the world was, He received gifts for men, that the Lord God should dwell amongst them, even among the rebellious. What were these gifts? "He gave some apostles; some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;" and that these latter officers are to be continued in the church the following words unquestionably prove: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." That is, evidently the pastoral office, as instituted by the Mediator of the New Covenant, shall continue till all the sheep of the good Shepherd are gathered into the Saviour's fold, till the lamp of divine truth is carried to every remote and idolatrous nation, till every system of Mahomedan delusion, and Jewish bigotry, and heathen superstition be overthrown, till, in a word, the gospel be given for a light to the Gentiles, and Jesus Christ for salvation to the ends of the earth. "Upon His head are many Crowns." "Men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed."

It is not our design at present to investigate at any length the grounds of those violent and unhappy disputes (for the unchristian spirit in which religious controversy has oftentimes been conducted we deplore), which have arisen at different times respecting what has been called Apostolical succession, or the necessity of ordination coming down in an unbroken chain from the Apostles themselves to the ministry of every succeeding age, to the present day, and even to the end of time. Maintaining, as we firmly do, the sovereign absolute authority of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as the supreme and only King and Head of the Church, we firmly believe, as held by the purest Reformed Churches,

that the Apostolic office as such, terminated with those who had supernatural gifts and apostolic authority in settling the affairs of the infant Church, according to her New Testament organisation. Do any maintain that they are ordained to succeed these extraordinary officers in virtue of a power and an authority derived from their predecessors? Then the proof of their apostleship will be written with the pencil of heaven in the Scriptures of truth. Are they inspired? Do they possess the gift of miracles? Have they seen the Lord? Have they been witnesses of his resurrection? Have they received their commission directly from Christ himself? We answer, Certainly not. With propriety we may affirm that the Apostles did a work which could not be repeated, and no others can ever be required to do what they were miraculously qualified to perform. Opinions contrary to those which we have uttered are indeed well calculated to foster the pride or encourage the prejudices of those who lord it over God's heritage. But we believe that there is a scriptural warrant for Presbyterian church government, and that there is a charter of incorporation furnished in the memorable promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," which no earthly creature can annul—and that the adorable Redeemer, in the riches of His grace, has made provision for a regular succession of gospel ministers, called in the New Testament, *Bishops* or *Presbyters*, possessed of equal authority and rank, in virtue of the great commission, to the end of time. "And the things which thou hast heard of Me before many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall teach others also." "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written—How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel, that bring glad tidings of good things." True preaching—the preaching that God will bless—comes from those who are really sent, and to every one who has the honour of being a faithful minister of the Word: for of our office we will boast, our office we will magnify; unto him it is said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." It becomes us then to rejoice that the ever-living, ever-reigning Head of the Church, is possessed of all power in heaven and on earth; and that as in times past he gave prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, so

he will continue the ordinance of the Christian ministry, and furnish with all needful gifts and graces, these *saviours* (Obad., verse 21) on Mount Zion; these *angels* or *messengers* of the Lord of Hosts called according to his own appointment, to shew unto their fellow men the way of salvation, and to dispense the ordinances of our holy religion till Christ come again. "No man taketh this honour to himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron," These words were primarily spoken of the Jewish high priest, under the legal economy; but his call was not more really divine than that of every minister of Christ. He is called of the Holy Ghost; and being so called, "he is no longer a servant of men, or by man, but of Jesus Christ." Happy then is he who can say with the apostle of the Gentiles: "I was made a minister according to the effectual working of his Spirit. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I might preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." No wonder that even he should exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The present may indeed be a time of perplexity and trouble amongst the nations; and it is difficult to say, in these stirring times, what a few days, or months, or years may unfold; but the future, as regards the Church, is a vision bright with glory, and all things are hastening on that glorious consummation of which the pen of inspiration has written, and which the voice of prophecy has foretold, in connection with the preaching of the glorious gospel. Therefore, till God's ancient people are restored, and the fulness of the Gentiles are brought in—till love and harmony and goodwill pervade the *confederated* nations; till through the instrumentality of that benevolence which is not circumscribed by the limits of the world, the sword shall be turned into a ploughshare and the spear into a pruning-hook; the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, shall lie together on the same pasture; and men shall not learn war any more, because that Christianity has spread its leavening influence over the whole earth; till then, even then, we say, will God raise up a divinely commissioned ministry to hold forth the word of life. Speaking of things not as they ought to be, and will be, but as they are, we remark again:

The same reasons as formerly existed for preaching the gospel still continue, and will continue to the end of time. The scriptures teach us, in language that cannot be misunderstood, that all the descendants of Adam are alienated from God, and enemies in their minds by wicked works; and the

most eminent saints have always been the most ready to confess this humiliating truth. Indeed the divine testimony on this all-important subject is confirmed by universal observation and experience. Does not every page in the volume of this world's history establish the inspired account of that corruption which has been transmitted from Adam to his descendants? In respect to the universal spread of this hereditary disease there is no difference between the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the prince and the peasant, the illiterate and the learned. As all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so all are by nature his enemies, the slaves of sin and the children of wrath. The message of heaven to the sinful myriads of our guilty race is contained in these words: *Be ye reconciled to God.* Did we find some verdant hill or peaceful vale on the earth's surface inhabited by human beings who need not such a message, we might say that they are like the angels, and that the gospel is not intended for them. But, alas! even the angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and people, has seen no such second paradise. Far different, indeed, are the mournful characteristics of some of the fairest and most luxuriant portions of the habitable globe, "where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile." But the world, all the world is the field of missionary exertion; and till the tidings of redeeming grace are borne on the wings of the wind to the innumerable islands of the vast Pacific—till the idolatrous worshippers of India and China hear them—till the six hundred millions of the eight hundred and sixty millions of this earth's inhabitants, without God and without Christ, whether involved in Pagan darkness or Mahommedan delusion, or Hindoo superstition, hear them and share in the blessedness of the people who know the joyful sound, the words of our text will remain unrepealed on the statute book of heaven.

Human laws are altogether inadequate to reach the cause of man's misery, or to remove the black spot which the Arabs say is on every man's heart by nature. Systems of philosophy, schemes of education, codes of jurisprudence, precepts of morality, fail altogether to meet the wants of man's spiritual being. The Gospel is the true balm of Gilead, the only effectual and divinely appointed remedy for man's spiritual and moral diseases; and a cloud of witnesses on earth and in heaven attest its efficacy. It is needed in every land, and with it the living missionary, the servant of the

God of the Bible, to proclaim its message and its mission to every continent, and to every clime, far as the wants and woes of man extend. Oh, when it comes home to the hearts of those who are dead in trespasses and sins, who see no beauty in Christ, no excellency in holiness, divine love triumphs over human hatred: they are quickened to a spiritual life, born again of the Holy Ghost, and it is their earnest prayer that the word which proscribes every other method of salvation, and testifies of Jesus Christ, of his incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension, as their only Saviour, may dwell in them richly, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Thus they make its promises the foundation of their hopes, its precepts the rule of their conduct, and God's glory the end of their being: whilst they confess that without Christ abiding in them by his Spirit, and their abiding in Christ by faith, they cannot successfully resist or overcome their spiritual enemies. Let those whose experience can be described in such language as this bless God, who has called them out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, and at the same time seek to be instruments of doing good to others, whilst they cherish the tenderest sympathy to such of their fellow creatures as are still in ignorance without any saving knowledge of those truths which the word of life inculcates. We do not expect that the enemies of Christ's righteousness will exert themselves in the promotion of Christianity; but we have reason to expect that its professed friends, under a sacred impulse, and the exercise of a benevolence which is not limited to any country nor bounded by any sea, will do more than look with what they regard as a lively interest on those benighted regions which the foot of civilization has never yet trod, and where the glad tidings of salvation have never yet been proclaimed. The money which in the nominally Christian world is spent annually on riotous living would, if differently appropriated, by the machinery of the gospel, produce a revolution far more extensive than the pages of history record, and more beneficial, beyond description, than ever has been effected by implements of war. Nevertheless the human mind, called into action by the voice of him who said, "*Let there be light and there was light,*" is directing its energies as it has never done before to the amelioration of mankind. Men of piety and enterprise volunteer their services; men of learning dedicate their literature; the poor of this world, who are rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom, pour out their supplications; and many of the opulent are

cheerfully and liberally contributing of their substance to the spread, both at home and abroad, of the glorious gospel. The times in which we live require energy and action. Much has been done; but much, very much, remains yet to be accomplished. Hear again the voice of the evangelical prophet: "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountains; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" (Isaiah xl. 9.)

Worldliness, ungodliness, idolatry, infidelity, error and heresy may for a time continue to prevail, but fear not: the Almighty has pledged His veracity, that in spite of every opposition His name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to His name, and a pure offering. The battle of truth against error, of faith against unbelief, of Christ against Satan and his emissaries, may be long and painful, but the cause of truth and righteousness, being the cause of God, must eventually prevail. The spirit of a Luther, and a Renwick, and a Guthrie, and a Knox shall yet arise.

" Then from the lips of truth one mighty breath
Shall, like a whirlwind, scatter in its breeze
The whole mankind of human mockeries."

Lastly, in connection with this part of our subject, we observe:

The past history of the Church encourages us to believe that there will be a succession of gospel ministers throughout all generations. God hath established a testimony and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children to be born. "My Spirit, that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." (Isaiah lix. 21). The removal by death of godly ministers may sometimes excite in survivors feelings of anxiety and sadness with regard to the perpetual dispensation of gospel ordinances, by those divinely appointed to publish the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ; but there is no good reason to fear that the Church will in any age be left destitute of such witnesses for the truth. It is certain indeed that those who teach the doctrines pertaining to the kingdom of God, like other men, have *a time to be born* and

a time to die, but Jehovah lives and liveth forever more. Our adorable Saviour, who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," furnishes pastors and teachers, with all needful qualifications, making them the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ; and when they have served their own generation, and passed away from the scene of their labours, others are raised up to occupy their places; so that the ministers of the gospel in any particular period of time may be regarded as so many links in that wondrous chain of instrumentality, which stretches backward to the beginning and forward to the end of time: He has put the treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be all his own.

Under the Old Testament dispensation God separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord, to minister unto him and to bless his name. From this tribe he established in the family of Aaron an everlasting priesthood, to offer sacrifices and to burn incense in his tabernacle throughout their generations. The Lord said unto Moses, "Thou shalt take unto thee Aaron, thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons." (Exodus xxviii. 1). When again Aaron was to be gathered to his people, Moses accompanied him to the top of mount Hor, stripped him of his garments, and put them on Eleazar his son, and then saw him die on the mount. Afterwards this divinely instituted priesthood was continued from generation to generation, until superseded by the Christian dispensation. It was foretold by Isaiah that God would take some of the Gentiles for priests and for Levites; and by Malachi, the last of the Jewish prophets, that not in Jerusalem only, but in every place, incense should be offered to His name, and a pure offering. Aaron himself was a type of our great High Priest. And now that Christ has come by the sacrifice of himself, to finish transgression, make an end of sin, and bring in an everlasting righteousness, the ministry of the New Testament, and the preaching of the word, accompanied by the Holy Ghost, is God's great ordinance—a standing ordinance for extending a knowledge of the gospel throughout the whole earth.

It appears from sacred history that the disciples, having the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles committed to them, went forth expounding the Scriptures, telling the simple story of the crucifixion and exaltation of

Christ—preaching repentance and remission of sins in his name, beginning at Jerusalem; and that extraordinary success attended their labours. Thus we find that a few years after the ascension of our Lord the number of the disciples, as the first fruits of the apostle's preaching on the day of Pentecost, was three thousand converts; that the Lord added daily to the Church of such as should be saved. Yea, that multitudes both of men and women, won from the darkness of heathenism, idolatry and superstition, embraced the doctrine of the despised Nazarene. Afterwards the conversion of Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian band, followed by the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost, was regarded as a divine intimation that the gospel of the Kingdom, as owned of God, was to be preached to all nations. Nearly nineteen centuries have rolled over our world, and we have the same gospel still—a preached gospel; we have still the same commission and commandment—the same promise of the Lord's presence and blessing on this divinely appointed instrumentality for making known to the most distant regions of all the earth a full, free, and eternal salvation.

As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children. (Psalm ciii. 15, 16, 17). "For of Him, and to Him, and through Him, are all things: to whom be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, world without end." AMEN.

CONCLUDING SKETCH.

In the preparation and delivery of this, and a previous discourse, from these words, "We are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding" (1 Chron. xxix. 15), my mind has been naturally influenced by the tidings which have very lately come across the ocean, of the death of an aged minister of Christ, who was personally known to some now present,—my revered Father. Some one has said in his autobiography that it is difficult for any person to speak long of himself without vanity, therefore, says he, I shall be short. I can fully appreciate the truthfulness of the remark as applied to my present melancholy duty. Filial partiality, or the warmth of filial attachment, will not lead

me, I trust, to draw a full length or over-coloured picture, if, as a matter of historical interest, for our mutual edification, as a last loving tribute of affection, combined with great respect to his memory, and above all, to the praise of that grace by which he was what he was, I refer thus publicly to a few particulars in the life, character and history of one whose instructions, counsels and prayers, I do not and cannot forget—of one who was the honoured associate, for more than the first half of the present century, of a McFadden, an Orr, an Alexander, & Gamble, and a Cameron, the ministry of a past but still remembered generation in our native land, to unfurl a banner for the truth on earth, and is now, as we feel assured, with his Saviour in heaven. “The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.” “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

My father was born 12th October, 1780, at Annsborough, County Down, near Belfast, Ireland, the residence of his father,* then pastor of the congregation of Knockbracken, &c. From a personal and domestic memorandum written by himself, it appears that after having received a preparatory education, he became a student in the college of Glasgow, Nov. 1797. There for four successive sessions he enjoyed the privilege of an extensive curriculum of literary and philosophical education; and he has left behind him ample evidence that he applied himself to his collegiate studies with diligence and success. In the mathematical and natural philosophy classes especially, he received some of the highest honours that ancient seat of learning could bestow. It does not appear that until this time he had been decided as to what profession should engage the energies of his future life; but it does seem that from an early age he was the subject of divine grace: and he now speedily adopted the resolution of devoting himself to the ministry of the word of life. After giving the usual pieces of trial before the Reformed Presbytery, he was licensed on the 19th of November, 1802, to preach the everlasting gospel; and he became thus accredited, according to the good order of the Presbyterian Church, to receive an invitation from any particular congregation to become its pastor. To use his own language—“I had not been long a probationer when I received a call from three vacant congregations: Lower Antrim, Lower Down, and Crevagh. At length after mature

* The Rev. Wm. Stavelly, latterly of Kellswater, County Antrim.

deliberation, I accepted the call from Lower Antrim at the Spring meeting of Presbytery, 1804. This congregation was regarded for many reasons, as the *least* eligible of the three; yet the choice was determined by Him who disposes of the minds of men. Having, as is customary, given the pieces of trial before Presbytery, I was ordained at Dervock meeting-house, 5th September, 1804."

In one district of his widely scattered charge, Kilraughts, through his exertions, a large and commodious house of worship was soon erected; and at the first census of the congregation there were 227 communicants. He who orders our footsteps and tells our wanderings, cast his lot in a part of the world where the ministers of the gospel were comparatively few: so that he was favoured from Sabbath to Sabbath with a large audience; and he had cheering evidence from an early period that his labours were not in vain, and that the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hand. "External amendments have in some instances certainly been accomplished; as to what is *internal* we must of course be silent. The Kingdom of God in the hearts of men cometh not with observation. The building of the spiritual temple in this respect resembles that of the Temple of old, in which was not found the sound of a hammer, or of the workman's tool."

We pass over much which under other circumstances we might mention concerning his ministerial labours during a period of more than fifty years. We have heard, and known, and our fathers have told us what God did in their day through their instrumentality and in answer to the prayers of his people. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and the wonderful works which He hath done.

After the toils and anxieties, the watchings and the prayers incident to such a long and chequered period in the life of man, he says, "The promising state of our congregation is a reason why we should joy and rejoice in the Lord. I could record its statistics, but I fear to say or write anything which might border on boasting. Union, co-operation, and the divine blessing, can do wonders. God has done much for us. That cause committed to our keeping has neither been abandoned nor mutilated; neither have we permitted any known innovation. We received it as we thought it the cause of God; we retain it, because we think it His; and, with His assistance, we purpose handing it down unimpaired to those who are pressing forward to occupy our place. We most cordially

rejoice in every step of reformation made by any denomination of christians, and that there are so many valiant for the truth in that part of the world where God has ordered our lot: whilst we ourselves maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the ancient Kirk of Scotland, as presently professed and practised in our Church. . . . I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant."

It was his desire in 1832 that his congregation, which in that year numbered upwards of five hundred communicants and had within its boundaries three houses of worship, should, become "two bands." "Feeling," says he, in reply to an address, with a very valuable testimonial, presented to him in 1854, "feeling unequal to the toil which a congregation so numerous and so extended required, I considered it my duty to recommend a division of the congregation. This was gone about in an orderly way; and in 1832 two calls were presented me through Presbytery—the one requesting that my ministerial services be restricted to Kilraughts, and the other asking that they be confined to Dervock congregation. Acting now as I had done at a period more remote, I gave myself to the weaker of the two; and from that time to this I have been the stated pastor of the united congregation of Dervock and Ballymoney. This, like many others, is sustaining annual loss in a continued emigration to the 'Far West;' yet the Master whom we serve, and whose cause we advocate, has amid deserved wrath remembered mercy. There are now in our congregation over three hundred communicants."

"In regard to our ministrations there are several incidents deserving of recollection. During the fifty years of my ministerial services there were only three Sabbaths in which I was not employed. One Sabbath I was not engaged in consequence of an altered appointment. On a second Sabbath death had entered into my family, and wrested from my embrace my first-born son; and on the third Sabbath I was indisposed.

"A second thing deserving notice is, that of 228 persons whose names were placed beneath my first call, there is not one forthcoming. They are all gone. They *were*, but now *are* not. I stand alone insulated by the ravages of the last enemy. Between us and death there is only one step. Yes, the very ministers and licentiates of 1804, with one exception and myself, have passed away—when sought for they are not to be found.

"A third thing deserving special notice is, that during this long period, and amid very many changes in the world, there has been a good understanding between minister and people. We have lived together in love and peace; and at no time was there any alienation of affection between teacher and taught. We have had times of scattering and times of gathering, times of sorrow and times of joy, times of lifting up and times of casting down, still the bond of union to Christ the Head, and to one another in Him, exists, and is, we believe, in continued operation. The suppressed sigh and the noiseless tear indicate, however, that the waters of Jordan are before us—not behind us. They are not crossed—but are yet to be crossed."

For a few years after he thus spake and wrote, and until some more hoary heads had disappeared from the eldership and membership of his flock, he continued with much of the zeal and earnestness of bygone days to go in and out amongst his attached people. They beheld from Sabbath to Sabbath, with solemn and affectionate interest, that venerable countenance which had now become so familiar, and heard that voice which they had so long known, still leading them in the green pastures and by the still waters of the sanctuary.

In 1857, when the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Ireland met at Dervock for the purpose of renewing the Covenants, National and Solemn League, in a Bond suited to the present time, it devolved on him, as the oldest minister of Synod, to preside in the solemn work. The Bond, as adapted to the circumstances of the Church, having been read over, paragraph by paragraph, he was the first to append his signature to it, as engrossed in a roll of parchment; and all the ministers, elders and licentiates, followed, severally attaching their names.*

* We cannot refrain from quoting in this connection the following expressive references to that memorable occasion, in the affecting services of which many brethren took a part:—

"This scene was indeed very striking and impressive—forcibly reminding one of some of those favoured occasions, on which our Presbyterian forefathers publicly pledged their allegiance to Zion's Covenanted King. The day was calm and delightful—the sun breaking forth with mellow splendour about the time the discourse on Covenanting was commenced, and continuing to shed his beams upon the House of Worship and surrounding grounds, and to gladden the assembly, till he sunk beneath the horizon. The dense congregation—consisting besides those in the neighbourhood, of many friends of the covenanted cause who had come from remote distances, and even of several brethren from Scotland—remained immovable in their seats for many hours; and appeared, at different parts of the service, penetrated by deep devotional feelings. When the ministers and elders stood up and

But to proceed. Advancing age brought its infirmities; and in 1858 our parent solicited the appointment of an assistant; and in 1860, the Rev. James Brown, by the unanimous choice of the Church, was ordained his assistant and successor, and is now the esteemed minister of that old respectable congregation to which my father sustained the pastoral relation for so many years, and in which I believe he had many seals to his ministry—many who will be, yea, are even now, his “joy and crown.”

In the evening of his days he was not a stranger to those domestic afflictions which are common to the children of men. His eldest son, already referred to, at the age and in the vigour of manhood, was first called home; then the faithful and beloved partner of his years; then a daughter; and then his youngest son, the staff and stay of his advancing age. But when toward the close of his well-spent life the “grief and labour” of a prolonged continuance on earth manifested itself to a considerable extent in debility both of mind and body, he had still, in the providence of God, those of his own family left around him who were willing, with all tenderness and love, to minister to his every comfort; and at last, on Sabbath evening, the fourth of December, 1864, in the 85th year of his age and the sixty-first of his ministry, the good father, the devoted pastor, the faithful friend and humble christian, peacefully passed away from the Sabbath on earth to enjoy a better Sabbath where there will be no night—where, in the society of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, he now enjoys the promised rest that remaineth to the christian in Heaven.

“Soldier of Christ well done—
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won—
Enter thy Master's joy.”

The apparently deep interest which you manifest in what I have spoken, connected with the history of the departed Minister of Christ, encourages me to say a few words more respecting one or two features of his general character.

swore the Covenant, many of the spectators shed tears; and as they came forward to append their signatures, the act was witnessed with breathless attention. It was as if all felt that God was among His people of a truth; and that an act had been performed, which tended to elevate and spiritualise the minds of all, and whose happy results would extend far beyond the present service into future generations.”—From “*A Memorial of Covenanting*,” a very interesting volume, by the Rev. Thomas Houston, D.D., Knockbracken.

The limits of this discourse will not permit of that delineation of which the subject is capable, and which we have ample materials to supply. In this congregation, from my earliest settlement, he naturally took the deepest interest, and always associated any little measure of success we might have with your spiritual welfare and growth in grace. I remember how in one communication he feelingly expressed a desire to know our people and friends here by name. Often indeed, at a late as well as an early period of his ministry, did he cherish an earnest desire, yea even formed the resolution, of visiting this Western world. "In consequence," says he in his memoranda, "of an invitation which I received in 1806 from America, I resolved to remove thither, but Presbytery after mature deliberation counteracted my intention." On this side of the Atlantic he had numerous correspondents, and amongst the ministers and members of the Church in the United States he had many warmly attached friends. Some of these, a McLeod, a Black, a Wylie, and a Wilson, who once adorned the American Church, with the McMillans, the Rowatts, the Masons, and the Symingtons, of the Scottish Church, were earlier called away; and he has now joined them in a brighter and better world where the genial fellowship of the redeemed, who meet to part no more, shall be uninterrupted and eternal. To others who are left behind, both on this and that side of the great waters, we doubt not his memory will long be precious. Amongst ourselves there was one kind friend, who, immediately on receiving intelligence of this bereavement, contributed, through the press, a graceful and affectionate tribute to his memory, who as a shock of corn fully ripe, has been cut down by the hand of death, and entered into the joy of his Lord.

When on earth few could more feelingly than he weep with them that wept, or comfort more tenderly the sons and daughters of affliction. He loved to follow in the footsteps of Him who was sent to *bind up the broken heart*, and to *comfort all that mourn*. "First he practised, afterward he preached." Whilst as a minister of Christ the great and substantial truths of the gospel were his favourite themes, and the energetic discharge of pastoral duties the object of his unwearied assiduity, missionary operations, tract societies, Sabbath schools, schools for the education of the young and rising generation, as well as other institutions of benevolence and philanthropy, had his cordial and constant support. As he was always well acquainted with the public movements, civil

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and ecclesiastical, of the times in which he lived, and could make his information profitable to others, his conversation was equally interesting and instructive. Seldom we think did any one retire from his society without having realised some pleasure and reaped some advantage. In the young, especially young men looking forward to the ministry, he always took a deep interest, and gave them when required, with all the earnestness and affection of a father, his judicious and friendly counsel. In the social and domestic circle he had a kind and happy manner, much of that simplicity and godly sincerity which will not soon be forgotten by his family, his flock, or his friends.* In the Courts of the Church his counsels were much valued, and in any discussion that arose he seemed always to remember that there is *a time to be silent and a time to speak*. He was, we need scarcely remark, a man of prayer, and his addresses to the throne of grace were characterised by much unction and liberty. Besides the morning and evening worship of God in the family, singing on each occasion some portion of the Psalms of David, which he so dearly loved, he spent the Sabbath evening chiefly according to the good old custom of former years—a custom we fear too much neglected by many professing christians in our day—in catechetical exercises, examining the members of his household on what they had heard or read through the day; thus striving to impress religious truth on the consciences and hearts of those around him. It is much, but not we think too much, to say that in every relation and in the discharge of every duty, he manifested in some good measure that sublime view of the christian life which the apostle enjoined upon Timothy, “An example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” When a friend rejoiced he

* One who knew him well (I refer to our mutual friend, the Rev. William Sommerville), in a letter written to me shortly after his decease, incidentally makes the following allusion:—“If I was asked to tell what Dr. Staveland was I would say, he was habitually cheerful but a stranger to levity, yet very susceptible of enjoyment from the sallies of youth. Without being censorious or a stern reprover, profanity dare not develop itself if in his presence. The poor and ignorant admitted to the nearest familiarity, never lost the profound respect to which he was entitled. His piety and ministerial consistency were never obtruded upon the notice of others but were felt, and giving form to his whole deportment left their impress on observers. Possessed of the dignity and address of a gentleman, which made his society ever acceptable to men of the world, he never forgot, nor permitted others to forget, that he was a Christian and a minister of the gospel. The only defect that seemed to cleave to him arose from that delicate sensibility which led him to bear an injury rather than give expression to wounded feelings.”

rejoiced with him—when he suffered adversity he sympathised with him—when he needed guidance he counselled him—when he erred he reproved him with the *meekness of wisdom*.

To a beloved brother in the ministry, named this evening amongst the departed, on the occasion of a sad domestic bereavement, he thus wrote :—

"Oh, it was a heavy stroke which deprived you of I—— and J——. But whence came this stroke? It was from the hand of a Father, yes, from your Father and my Father, from your God and my God. We should not open our mouths to question, to fret, to repine. This work, 'O Lord, is thine.' Here is the arresting and solemnising consideration. It was the Lord's doing. He gave, and he has taken away. Oh that we could in the full exercise of filial submission say, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.' I am not sure, my dear brother, that there is any of the New Covenant relations in which God stands to His people which should more frequently command our attentive consideration than that of a father. In a father's love, in a father's pity, in a father's care, and in the chastisement of a father's hand, there is much instruction. We discern all this pretty well; but yet we are puzzled about chastisement. We can explain it in reference to others; but when afflictions come on us, or on our children, we have difficulty in learning the lessons we have been striving to teach; we are nonplussed in reducing to practice the very instructions we have been tendering to our fellow sufferers. It is only the sovereign grace of God, that can make us docile, submissive and contented. Believing that you have been taught of God, you have now an opportunity of bringing before the surviving members of your family, before your congregation, before your townsmen—before the Church and before the world—the hallowed and heavenly bearing of that divine tuition under which you have been. It is, and shall be my daily prayer, that you and yours, coming out of the furnace, may not only appear, but actually be a family from which the glory of God shall be reflected to every part of the circle with which you are connected.

What more does the Lord require. In a little, a very little time, my brother, shall you be called home; your Father will shortly require your attendance in the upper story of the building of mercy, and all that he has been doing in you and around you has had for its object your holy, happy and triumphant departure. Your work and day shall together soon terminate, and some of these illegible pages in the volume of Providence which are now read so badly shall be then well understood. Do not allow yourself to shrink from the stroke; it is accompanied with a Father's love. Your children gave hopeful evidence that they were born of God—children of His family and partakers of His holiness. You may have lost, they have gained. You may be sad, but they possess an unspeakable joy and an imperishable glory.

They have reached their heavenly home, far away from a world of sin and sorrow, and mingle, whilst I am writing, with the redeemed spirits before the throne of the Eternal. 'Weep not for me,' said the compassionate Saviour, 'weep not for me, but for yourselves, and for your children.'

In conclusion, as there may be some mourner now present needing comfort under bereavement, I will add an extract from a letter written to another Christian friend—one whose house had likewise been darkened by the shadow of death :—

"Lately I addressed my people from these words—'How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?' This is a question which concerns us. The death of our neighbours, our friends, our children, brings this question home to you

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and to me. To collect materials for a correct and soul-satisfying answer is not by any means so easy as some might imagine. Is it not well that conscience becomes an advocate for the claims of Jehovah? It rejects our own righteousness; it even rejects its combination with Christ's righteousness, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, requires a total reliance on our New Testament Joshua for conducting us through Jordan's heavy surges into the land of peace and rest. . . . When the foundations of the second temple were laid, the voice of joy and of sorrow were so blended that it was difficult to distinguish the one from the other. Thus I believe it is in the bereavement which pious parents sustain in the removal of their pious children. May the good Lord make up your loss in the enlarged communication of His grace to your own soul, and may the affliction you have sustained be instrumental in preparing you for the enjoyment of a holiness and a happiness which belong exclusively to the redeemed."

IMPROVEMENT.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS—The subject which we have brought under your consideration this evening, the perpetuity of the word of God, "which by the gospel is preached unto you," is indeed a subject of infinite importance. Oh, let every one of us seek so to receive the message with which we are favoured, that when all our tears, trials and comforts, in so far as this present state of existence is concerned, have passed away forever, we may together enjoy that eternal life secured by the blood of Christ to all who believe in His name.

Surely if the angels in glory rejoiced at the Saviour's birth, we, though neither possessed of their knowledge nor of their purity, should be exceeding glad; as the Saviour was not provided for angels, but for the children of men. That we might be saved from the curse of a broken law He was made a curse for us. Though holy and innocent in Himself he was numbered with the transgressors. For us He suffered and died—for us He lives and reigns. What then? "We who live should not live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again." Oh, it is no wonder that these "sons of God" who sang together at creation's birth should even now tarry in their flight of love, as they are sent to minister to the heirs of salvation, that they may look into the mysteries of redeeming mercy, ever discovering in these things new matter for admiration, gratitude and praise. I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, by the truth of His word, by the certainty of His threatenings, by the faithfulness of His promises, by the shortness of time, and the endless duration of eternity, to improve what we have said. Seek now the promised aid of divine grace, that you may be prepared at last in a state of glory to unite with holy angels and holy men in joyful ascriptions of gratitude to "Him

who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever." He who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and holds in his right hand the seven stars, which are the ministers of the seven churches, has been pleased to institute and bless a system of means which shall prove the wisdom of God, and the power of God in the salvation of all his people. He hath promised to bless Zion's provision, to satisfy her poor with bread, to clothe her priests with salvation, and that her saints shall shout aloud for joy: yet for these things will He be enquired of by the house of Israel. He with whom is the residue of the Spirit is ever willing to give if we are willing to ask. Has He not said, "Ask and ye shall receive." Yea, the word has gone out of His mouth, and endureth forever—a source of encouragement to the sinner, and of consolation to the saint. *He will give His holy Spirit to them who ask him.* "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." (Psalm xlviii. 12, 13, 14.)

Finally, brethren—*The voice of bereavement, which is at the same time the voice of admonition, should be heard, and its lessons of wisdom improved.* Whilst, therefore, we seek to avoid the mournful symptom of degeneracy so emphatically described by Isaiah; whose words of inspired wisdom we have so frequently introduced this evening—"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come," (Isaiah lvii. 1.)—let us seek to follow those who have lived and died by faith, even as they also have followed Christ. Surely it becometh us to remember what they now are, that we ourselves may resemble in some measure what they once were. For him, to whose life and character we have at this time briefly referred, we need not weep: for we sorrow not as those who have no hope. His work in the church militant was done; and having finished his course, and kept the faith, he now wears a crown of glory in the Kingdom of his blessed Master.

The removal by death, from our society and friendship of those who were the sharers of our joys and sorrows, of those who were united to us on earth by the dearest and tenderest ties of nature and of grace; of those, especially, who sought in the early stages of our life's journey, under a solemn sense of their obligation to God, to bring us up in the nurture and

knowledge of the Lord, and who at the family altar as the morning opened and the evening closed, whenever the psalm of praise was sung and the voice of prayer was uttered, remembered us, is an event which it would be criminal and ungrateful for to forget.

"Weep ye not for the dead," says Jeremiah, "neither bemoan him, but weep sore for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more nor see his native country." He who has come away, to improve the allusion of the weeping Prophet, from all those fond family endearments which he enjoyed in infancy and youth, when every scene was gladness, and every season spring, and every spot was green, can find no place dearer to him than his childhood's home. The very name is hallowed and delightful. Yes, as changes come and maturer years pass away, pregnant with the stern realities of life, its anxieties, its bereavements and its cares, busy memory retracing every scene still looks back to those bright and happy days when in a pious mother's love, and a godly father's care, and a gentle sister's smile, he found his chiefest joy. Happy, indeed, is the exile, and some before me far far away from their native land can recognise the truth and application of such a reference, who, as he hears from time to time of the links of his once unbroken family circle being severed by the hand of disease or death, and who, though he was not privileged to stand around the dying bed, or to cast a longing, lingering look on that loveliness in death, "which parts not quite with parting breath," or to join in the slow and solemn funeral procession, or to appear chief amongst the mourners around the open tomb as it received to their last resting place—even earth's lowest room—the lifeless dust of the honoured dead; who, though he may never be privileged in after days or years to bedew the urn of relationship with affection's tears, yet guided not by the faint glimmerings of nature's light, nor by the vague and unsatisfactory teachings of philosophy, but by the noontide brightness of revelation and the good hope of the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a disciple of Him who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, can look beyond the dark cloud of sorrow, the chilling shadows of the valley of death and the deep gloom of the grave, to a happy meeting and a happy home with those whom he has loved and mourned on earth, where no natural or moral evil can exist, where former trials will be remembered only to increase an ever present joy; where the mystery and the mercy of every dispensation will be made clear in an ever-advancing

knowledge of the perfections and the providence of God; where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away from that building of God, that house not made with hands, even the many mansions of our Father's house in that place which Christ himself has gone to prepare for His people, and where all the redeemed, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, evangelists, pastors and saints, from every age, from every dispensation and from every clime, from the north and the south, and the east and the west, shall form one family, one great society under one blessed Head, Jesus Christ, the elder Brother; a family that can experience no change and can mourn over no separation, for the links which bind its members together can never be broken—a whole family for evermore at HOME IN HEAVEN.

In conclusion, gospel hearer, may we not ask the question—*How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?* Can you now claim an interest in this promise: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon you." If so, rejoice—you are Christ's. You have no other friend that loves you like this Friend; and He will love you to the end. Clothed in His righteousness, and sanctified by His Spirit, you need fear neither fire nor flood. The land of promise is before you. His gracious presence with you, as you pass through that river which divides time from eternity, is a sure antidote against the fear of death; and wherever and whenever the last enemy may come—whether at the beginning, or the middle, or the close of the year—whether at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, Jesus himself will come too, that he may introduce you to life and rest, and joy, to a stainless holiness, a spotless happiness, and an uninterrupted peace. "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." (Isaiah lx. 20). And he will come again at the end of the world in His own and His Father's glory, and the glory of His holy angels, when yonder heavens and this earth shall witness that none else is Judge but God! "Behold," says He, "I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Hear again His voice—it is the voice of your beloved: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

"On the brow of mighty monarchs may sparkle many a gem,
And gold, and pearls, and jewels may deck the diadem ;
But it shines with earthly lustre—it will tarnish and decay—
While the christian's crown of amaranth will never fade away.

Proud were the mighty conquerors, crown'd in Olympic games ;
They deem'd that deathless honours were entwined around their names ;
But ere was soon the ivy wreath, and the olive, and the bay,
While the christian's crown of amaranth will never fade away.

With a harp of angel melody, and a palm-branch in his hand,
The saint, 'mid circling spirits, round the golden throne shall stand ;
And his song shall be enduring as heaven's eternal day,
And his victor crown of amaranth shall never fade away."

Now, brethren, we commend you to God, who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, praying that He would make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing to His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.



A P P E N D I X.

After the previous sermon was in type, the author received a copy of a Discourse, delivered in Ballymoney, by the Rev. Robert Nevin, and published in January. Mr. Nevin is the son of one who was, till the time of his death, a greatly esteemed Elder of Dervock and Ballymoney congregation. He himself is a distinguished Minister, and now Pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Londonderry, Ireland.

From this Discourse, founded on 2 Sam. iii. 38, the following extracts are made :—

“When I would attempt a delineation of the CHARACTER of our beloved father, as a man, a Christian, and a minister of the Word, I approach a part of my theme of greater difficulty and delicacy. We have, no doubt, here a noble subject for a moral portraiture. May it not be marred in the hands of an incompetent artist! Dr. Staveland was tall in stature, robust, and well-proportioned, altogether a man of commanding presence. Grave and dignified in aspect and demeanour, blameless in the truthfulness and integrity of his life and conduct, those who knew him best would have been shocked and indignant at the very idea of connecting anything little, mean, or frivolous with his name. His very presence was an effectual check and restraint on every approach to unbecoming levity on the part of others. Yet in admirable combination with this dignity was the affability, the kindness, the geniality of his nature. Easily accessible to all, he knew well how to suit himself to every capacity, at home alike with the sage philosopher and the little child. His manners were cast in the mould of true politeness. His conversational powers were of the highest order. Drawing from the rich stores of his cultivated mind that which his refined taste and delicacy of judgment enabled him to set off to the best advantage, he was fitted to take a place in any circle of society, and shine brilliantly there. In these respects, indeed, he was a prince amongst men, reigning easily without a rival, like Saul among the Israelites, the head and shoulders above others. He was the very model of the finished Christian gentleman. In all the relations of private life, he was an example of the believers—a most affectionate husband, a tender father, a firm friend, a judicious counsellor. Given to hospitality, his acquaintance was large, his society was courted, and he had an extensive correspondence with many on both sides of the Atlantic. In the pulpit he was peculiarly solemn and impressive. The doctrines of free grace were declared with all fidelity and much unction. There was no tinsel or meretricious adornment, but solid instruction and weighty sentiment, the manifest result of much study. The scientific cast of his mind enabled him to express his thoughts in language at once logically precise, appropriate, chaste, and elegant. Clearly apprehending both doctrine and duty himself, with the bearing of the one upon the other, he set them forth plainly and forcibly before his auditory, urging them home to the heart and conscience in measured accents and distinct utterance. A discourse from him was no exemplification of laboured dexterity in mere word building; not a bushel of chaff, in which one would have to search long and hard to find a grain of wheat. Rather was it a bushel of rich grain in which the labour and the search would be to find a single particle of chaff. Never perhaps, was there

one to whom the well-known lines of Cowper could have a more strikingly just application :—

'Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master strokes, and draw from his design :
I would express him simple, grave, sincere ;
In doctrine uncorrupt ; in language plain,
And plain in manner ; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture ; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too ; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.'

Sincerely attached to the Principles and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, he did not shun the exposition and application of them when occasion seemed to require. One possessed of his accomplishments, natural and acquired, had he chosen a different profession, or had he even entered the ministry of some other connection, might easily have raised his prospects for this world very much higher. But having, on deliberate and conscientious conviction, cast his lot with the Covenanters, and decided on exercising his ministry amongst them, he never after repented his choice, notwithstanding the privations which it necessarily involved. Yet his was no narrow and sectarian spirit that would coop itself up within the limits of its own denomination, and refuse the practical recognition of any excellence lying beyond. He acknowledged and rejoiced in the universal brotherhood of believers in Jesus. When another appeared in the field, engaged in fighting the good fight of faith, though his uniform might be somewhat different from his own, and though it was under a banner somewhat different from that which he followed, he could salute him as a fellow-soldier in the one great sacramental host of the Divine Captain of the common salvation. He made himself versant with the various movements in the world abroad, that he might have understanding of the times, and sound a seasonable trumpet-note of warning as to what Israel ought to do ; and he was ever ready and willing to co-operate with brethren of other denominations, in any scheme of piety and benevolence, when this could be done without the compromise or abandonment, to any extent, of our peculiar position. This trait in his character, this large hearted catholicity, was well-known and appreciated. A touching evidence of this was furnished on the day of his interment. I could not but note with great satisfaction the numbers of brother ministers, belonging to another section of the Church of Christ, some of them from considerable distances, who joined in the funeral procession, and in paying the last sad offices of respect to the remains of departed worth.

And now that he has gone to his reward : that we shall see his face and hear his voice no more on earth, it may seem to some the fond and partial estimate of one who is only delighted to have this public opportunity to acknowledge his obligations to him ; and who, if he has any clear views in respect to Christian faith and practice, ascribes it in a great measure, under God, to having sat at His feet, and having grown up listening from Sabbath to Sabbath to his lucid expositions of divinely revealed truth, nevertheless the conviction is strong, and I must express it : 'Take him for all in all, we ne'er shall look upon his like again.' A stranger might deem the eulogium exaggerated. But I address myself to those who knew him most intimately, who have seen his going out and coming in, and had the best opportunities of remarking the beautiful, Christ-like consistency of his long life. I speak to men of intelligence and discriminating judgment. Say—I can trust your verdict—have I overdrawn the picture in the least ? have I dipped my brush in one whit too glowing colours ? The call in Providence is loud to you, my beloved brethren : 'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel ?'

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REDEEMING THE TIME.

A SERMON,

PREACHED ON SABBATH EVENING, JANUARY 3, 1864.

AMOS v. 13, 14.—“It is an evil time. Seek good and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you.”

This Discourse was first printed in the columns of the *Colonial Presbyterian*. The following extract from an editorial article in reference to it in that journal will explain the circumstances under which it was preached and published :—

“We this week present our readers with a Sermon by the Rev. Mr. AVELY, which will well repay perusal and study. It was preached at the beginning of the present year. It is also invested with interest as having been delivered very shortly after the experience of a sore domestic bereavement by the preacher. All who knew the circumstances of the case deeply sympathised with our beloved brother, and many who heard this Sermon, which was afterwards delivered in the St. John Presbyterian Church, wished to see it in print.”

That the Discourse in its present form may be profitable to those who read it, is the fervent prayer of the Author.

REDEEMING THE TIME.

EPHESIANS v. 16.—"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

THIS Epistle was addressed by Paul during his imprisonment at Rome to the saints at Ephesus; for, in his day, there existed there one of the most numerous and important of all the Asiatic Churches. Ephesus itself, the capital of Ionia, and the metropolis of proconsular Asia, was celebrated for its famous temple, and the great goddess, Artemis, or Diana of the Ephesians, in whose honour it was erected. It was distinguished likewise for the luxury, idolatry, and superstition of its inhabitants. Christianity was planted at an early period in this renowned city, by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and in no one place does the Word of God appear to have been accompanied with greater power in the conversion of sinners. This animated Epistle was doubtless written when the Ephesian Church enjoyed a high measure of spiritual prosperity; and yet, as has been remarked, it will suit for any church or any age.

In the commencement of this fifth chapter, the inspired servant and prisoner of the Lord urges upon the believing Ephesians the duty and necessity of living a life of holiness, and walking in love, as the dear children of Him whose name is love. He then proceeds to point out, on the one hand, several evils to be avoided; and, on the other, to urge, by a variety of cogent and weighty arguments, the performance of various important personal and relative duties. One of these is mentioned in the passage before us, when enforcing, as he does in the preceding verse, the duty of circumspection. There is no precept more neglected, and yet there is none more important than the one inculcated in our text. The term here used to designate that which we are called to redeem, signifies a particular part or portion of duration, which we measure by seconds, minutes, days,

weeks, months, and years. In this view of time we must all agree with the aged patriarch Jacob, that *the days of the years of the life of our pilgrimage are few*, and that as year after year is fleeting by, we are hurried on by a hand which none can resist, and by an arm which none can control, to an eternal state of being. Mutation and uncertainty are inscribed on everything beneath the sun. Even the world of nature around us confirms the divine testimony with regard to our own mortality, and the *living know that they must die*. One generation after another passes away from the theatre of human existence. Our fathers and mothers, where are they? Our brothers, sisters, and children, where are they? Our relatives, neighbours and friends, where are they? Sometimes the leaf withereth, at another the flower fadeth. "Man dieth, and wasteth away, and giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Hear, then, the exhortation of inspired wisdom; for neither youth nor beauty, neither wealth nor vigour, neither power nor rank, can save us from the shroud, the coffin, and the tomb! A few more years, and all will be there. A few days, a few weeks, or even a few hours, and we may be there. None can affirm the contrary; for what, in accordance with the solemn and impressive imagery of Scripture, is life? A vapour, a shadow, a hand-breadth, a dream, a tale that is told, "a flying shuttle, nay a span, so short and frail the life of man." Oh! child of Adam, boast not of to-morrow. You have no promise of a prolonged existence; but you do know that none can escape death, and that the immortal spirit must finally render an account at the judgment seat of Christ for the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or bad. What would those who were here deaf to every warning of the word or providence of God, and who have passed away impenitent, unsaved, to that cheerless abode where hope never enters, give now for such admonitions as you are still privileged to hear! "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

In discoursing briefly from these words, we shall consider:—

I. What is implied in redeeming the time.

II. The argument by which the exhortation is enforced.

FIRST. Redeeming the time implies making up for time that has been lost, by increased industry and perseverance. To redeem, in the language of Scripture, signifies to reclaim or bring back what has been sold, forfeited, or alienated;

and this is likewise the popular meaning of the term. It is not, however, to be supposed from this definition that when time has passed away it can ever be brought back. The present is the only season either for getting good ourselves, or doing good to others. Opportunities we may have misimproved in the days of other years, cannot be recalled, and every step we take in the journey of life is only a step nearer to the tomb. The exhortation of this verse has, therefore, a special reference to our immediate duty. Now redeem the time. "Whatsoever," says the Royal Preacher, "thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest."

Alas! as if this inspired injunction were of no value, many eat and drink and sleep, lie down and rise up, in the total neglect of their spiritual interests; forgetting altogether that either the faculties of the mind or the members of the body are to be consecrated to the service of God. Now, were man's existence to terminate with this present state—were there no place beyond the grave to which the weary, way-worn traveller might direct his wistful thoughts, such a line of conduct might seem reasonable and just; but as each one of us is born for eternity, and as the due improvement of time, under the blessing of God, can alone prepare for a happy immortality, we should ever be influenced by a consideration of its pre-eminent importance to obey the precept contained in our text. Let us, then, seek to estimate in the light of eternity the means we enjoy for personal advantage or relative usefulness; and as week after week, month after month, and year after year, is passing away, laden with temporal mercies and spiritual privileges, let us who profess to love and honour the only Saviour, seize the present hour, and avail ourselves of the rich opportunities we enjoy, in doing something, according to our station and our means, to ameliorate human woe, and for the salvation of lost sinners. Thus let us evidence the power of a *living* religion in our day and generation, by consecrating our time and talents, whatever they may be, to promote the welfare of our fellow-creatures, the interests of holiness, and the glory of God. "Man," says Cicero, "was not made for himself; his country and his friends have a claim upon him." Christianity itself, the offspring of the Father of lights, regards him as a citizen of the world, and the spirit of our holy religion is a spirit of diffusive benevolence. It teaches us, *as we have opportunity* (time,

or season), *to do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

“Friend, parent, brother, first it will embrace,
Our country next, and next the human race.”

Does any one ask, as did Saul of Tarsus after his conversion, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Look around, and in fulfilling the active duties of benevolence, you will find openings for usefulness everywhere. Ah! in your own families, in the Christian society in which you move, in the church with which you are connected, there are spheres in which your influence should be more and more felt; and beyond all these, in aiding, as God has prospered you, the various charitable institutions which are established in this city—in helping the poor, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, the widow, and the fatherless, in their afflictions; and pointing the dying to that which can alone give peace, and hope, and joy, in the hour of death, you may show your love to God and love to man, which is the fulfilling of the law. Be not weary in well-doing. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand. “Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord—forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

SECONDLY. By the judicious employment of time we redeem it. Time, as we have stated, is irrecoverable; still there is a sense in which, by the wise use of the present, and doubling our diligence for the future, we may make some amends for past trifling and procrastination. The original word here translated time is occasionally rendered season, or suitable opportunity; and if its worth according to this definition were justly considered, we would see still more and more its value, and realize the necessity of duly estimating its infinite importance. It is recorded of a certain martyr who was immured in a dungeon, that when light was brought to him for a little season, that he might see to eat his food, he occupied his time in reading a chapter in the Bible, and eat his meal when the light was gone. Alas! there are few, comparatively few, who manifest the same regard for the concerns of eternity, whilst multitudes seek to elude the scrutinising eye of Him to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, and the darkness shineth as the day. The avocations of a present world demand attention, and we too willingly yield to these all their claim, occupying precious time, ceaselessly and

strenuously, in the dull routine of commonplace duties, or still less excusable frivolous amusements; as if we had no souls to be saved or lost, happy or miserable; as if the circumference of earth bounded our desires and our hopes, and as if the treasures of time were to be preferred to the glories and felicities of eternity.

"Procrastination is the thief of time,
Year after year it steals, till all are fled;
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The VAST CONCERNS of an immortal soul."

THIRDLY. By employing our time in diligent preparation for eternity we redeem it. If it be admitted that our time on earth is so short—if every season of the year—if every hour of the day reminds us of our mortality, and if death may come to us as it has to others in a moment, and in a manner that we do not expect, surely we should double our diligence that we may become wise unto salvation. Let us all then labour for such a blessed and glorious result, and while our Heavenly Father is still pleased to gladden our hearts with His mercies, to continue with us so many civil and religious advantages, and to crown our years with so many tokens of His love, let every individual look to himself, let every family look to itself, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. We have had a lengthened day of grace. Many who accompanied us side by side, or were before us in the wilderness journey, have gone to their last account, but we are not yet cut down. Alas! the retrospect of life in relation to the soul and eternity, frequently presents even to the eye of the professing christian, who has been long spared in the vineyard, much that is calculated to produce mourning and woe. "If I had only served my God," said the dying Wolsey, "as diligently as I have served my King, He would not have forsaken me in my old age."

For what purpose then are we called upon to redeem our time? It is that by the due improvement of every passing hour—it is that by the abiding sense of our vast responsibility—it is that actuated by the love of Christ, we may so spend the allotted period of our existence on earth, that when God comes to call us to Himself, not by any works of righteousness which we have done or can do, but freely by grace through faith, we may reach the bright regions of eternal love. Let the words of the great Teacher then sink deep into every heart: "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even or at

midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping, and what I say unto one, I say unto all, WATCH." It is when the husbandman sleeps that the enemy sows tares. It is when the watchman slumbers that the thief scales the walls. It is when the traveller is inattentive to the way that he wanders from the old paths. Live then, we beseech you, as dying creatures, that when the day of your death comes, it may be better than the day of your birth, and that on the shores of the Jordan you may triumph with the sweet singer of Israel, saying: "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

"Death is the crown of life—
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
Were death denied, to live would not be life;
Were death denied, even fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure—we fall—we rise—we reign,
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost;
The King of Terrors is the Prince of Peace,
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When shall I die—when shall I live for ever!"

We shall now consider—

II. The argument by which the exhortation of the text is enforced. *The days are evil.* There may be a passing reference in these words to the melancholy character of the times in which the Apostle lived, or to the bitter opposition to which the Ephesians were exposed, for righteousness sake. The writer of this epistle himself laid it down as an inspired maxim, "All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and the infant church furnished a striking illustration of its truth. Often, indeed, has the blood of the saints been shed like water, but persecution, death, every invention which the malice and hatred of Satan could suggest, has only served to show how God can bring good out of evil, and make the wrath of man to praise Him. He who can control the waves of the ocean, and turn the storm into a calm, has preserved His Church in the midst of many a tempest, and enabled her like the ark of old to outride the fiercest hurricane. It is a fact, brethren, that in the age of the Apostles, christianity, at first confined to Judea, was carried to almost every part of the Roman empire, and although all classes and kindreds of men, Jew and Greek, barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, were opposed to the new religion, yet it triumphed over every other system of

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worship, and in defiance of every opposition, extended in two hundred years from Persia and India on the east, to Spain and Britain on the west. In less than three centuries from the commencement of the Christian era, the Roman empire became at least professedly Christian, and the temples of Paganism, like the walls of Jericho when the ark of the covenant was carried around them, fell before the ark of the Lord. This is the Lord's doing, and it is still marvellous in our eyes. He made the remnant of Jacob to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the earth with fruit. In vain did superstition and immorality, the prejudices of the Jew, and the philosophy of the Gentiles, oppose the progress of the gospel. Persecution in every shape and form, only served to further the success of those who were called to preach it. *They* rendered unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and unto God the things that were God's; and through the blessing of Him who sends not His servants a warfare on their own charges, "their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." *You mow us down*, said one of the most eloquent fathers, *but we spring up under the scythe. The gospel has found its way into your palaces, your senate, your army. To extirpate christianity, you must depopulate whole provinces that own the supremacy of Rome and reign over deserts.*

As we have hinted, the argument of our text has a special reference to the sufferings of the professors of religion in early times. It is true our lot is cast in brighter and better days, when the followers of Christ can sit down under their vine and fig-tree, none to make them afraid. Still there is in every age the same reason for circumspection, and so long as there is sin, the greatest of all evils, there will be sorrow, suffering, and death. An inquiry into the origin of moral evil, suggests difficulties which the human mind in its present imperfect state is altogether unable, satisfactorily, to explain; submitting, however, to the guidance of revelation, we are disposed to say in reference to this deeply mysterious subject, that God made man upright, even after His own image, and that in the exercise of his own free will he lost that image, and became the author of his own misery. Why God permitted the apostacy of our first parents? How this permission was consistent with His holiness, wisdom, and goodness? are questions which we can only answer in the language of inspiration. "Is there evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? I kill and I make alive; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create

evil; I the Lord do all these things." With such thoughts present to the mind, we remark :

Days of prevailing ungodliness and immorality are evil days. We have no hesitation, whatever, in saying that these are characteristic features of our own times. The gospel teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and to be holy in all manner of conversation. But we live in evil days. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. Whilst multitudes form their profession according to the alone infallible rule, the sacred Scriptures, how few seek to grow in grace that they may adorn their profession by a godly and consistent practice. Thus even when we look *within* the pale of the visible Church, and find very many cheering evidences of spiritual prosperity, we observe here, likewise, a form of godliness without the power, a name to live in the midst of death ! A slight observation will indeed convince us that there are those who prefer things that are temporal to things which are eternal. Of how many, alas ! in this sinful, selfish world, may it still be said *they seek their own and not the things which are Jesus Christ's*.

Again, if we look *without* the pale of the visible Church, we see an unnumbered multitude, even in lands of gospel light, given up to scepticism, infidelity, and irreligion, ready to perish, willing to live and to die without God. There are others, and their name is Legion, of whom we may tell you with the Apostle, weeping, for "they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." They may have Sabbaths, but they profane them; sanctuaries, but they despise them; ordinances, but they neglect them : for, given over to a reprobate mind, they are alike indifferent to the joys of Heaven and the miseries of Hell. Think, too, of the millions in heathen countries who are the devotees of idolatry, paganism, and superstition, bowing down to gods of gold, or silver, or wood, graven by art or man's device.

So long, therefore, as error in its various forms abounds—so long as the world at large presents to the eye of the Christian, the patriot, the philanthropist, one wide-spread field of spiritual misery—so long as many around us are sitting in darkness, profane, licentious, and irreligious, there are innumerable evils. Evils too, characteristic alas ! of the times in which we live; the perilous times of the last days. Did circumstances permit, we might refer to other topics. We can only at present find leisure to remark before passing to another particular, that the page of unfulfilled prophecy

teaches us to expect, in these last times, days of darkness and gloominess, when the things that may be shaken must be shaken, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. When we contemplate the state of civilized Europe and America at the present hour; the latter with its bloody civil war, and the former with its manifold discord, suggesting, as regards Denmark and Germany, Poland and Hungary, questions which the wisdom of the diplomatist, or the knowledge of the statesman, is unable to answer, and which it may yet require the sword of the warrior to settle; when we contemplate the aspect of the moral, political and religious horizon, in these most portentous times, we can only give utterance to our feelings in the expressive words of Ezekiel, "Lo the roll of a book, and there was written therein mourning, lamentation, and woe." The year upon which we have lately entered will doubtless bring many changes, and possibly changes of the very greatest importance, both civil and ecclesiastical, as connected with the future history of the church and of the world. It is our consolation, however, that there is a God who judgeth on the earth, and if by "terrible things," He answers the prayers of His people, it is *in righteousness*. Surely, my friends, the signs of the times indicate a very near approach to that delightful era foretold in prophecy, when every species of evil being removed, every system of anti-christian error overthrown, the Messiah, so long robbed of that honour which belongs to Him as King of kings and Lord of lords, shall appear glorious before all nations, and the banner of his cross shall wave in triumph over a regenerated world. Though in the meantime there should be "distress of nations and perplexity;" when these things, says He, "begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." "Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

Cheered by such an invitation as this you may well adopt the language of the son of Amos, and say, as every member of Christ's flock can say, amidst the toils and tears, the sorrows and bereavements of your Christian pilgrimage, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." Already the night is far spent, the day is at hand, your redemption draweth nigh. Even now you can look with the eye of faith, brightened with a well-grounded hope, to

the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, even the glory and blessedness of your promised rest, whilst you breathe again the prayer of Moses: "I pray thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon." Already you can listen with the ear of faith to the whisper of some angel-messenger that would cheer and comfort you amidst the trials and difficulties of this present life.

"I hear it singing, sweetly singing,
Singing in an under tone,
Singing as if God had taught it—
It is better farther on.

Night and day it sings the song,
Sings it while I sit alone,
Sings so that the heart may hear it—
It is better farther on.

Sits upon the grave and sings it,
Sings it when the heart would groan,
Sings it when the shadows darken—
It is better farther on.

Farther on, but how much farther?
Count the milestones one by one;
No, no counting, only trusting—
It is better farther on.

As the Apostle in our text refers to natural as well as moral evil, we observe lastly, *Days of special trial and affliction are evil days.* That human life is a state of suffering, that man is born to sorrow, that seasons of adversity are common to all, that days of trial and labour, and wearisome nights are appointed to the sons and daughters of mortality in this vale of tears, and that the children of Zion themselves must, through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven, are facts revealed in Scripture, and fully confirmed by our own observation and experience. "Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?" When seasons of trial and bereavement come, leaving wounds that time can never heal, and creating losses which time can never supply, we are disposed to say when called to pass through such dark and mysterious dispensations, that the days are evil. "Fools," says the Psalmist, because "of their iniquities are afflicted." The Apostle, however, teacheth us that, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every child whom He receiveth." Afflictions may and do come in various forms, but in them all we humbly recognize the sovereignty of our heavenly Father, His unerring wisdom, and His infinite love. He has graciously promised to

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support His dear children under every trial. His anger endureth but for a moment, and the very evils which they deprecate, He will overrule for good. Even when the waves of adversity roll mountains high, and the troubled sky is darkened with the cloud of vengeance, there is a hiding place from the storm, and we hear a voice which imposes silent submission. 'Be still, and know that I am God: My wisdom is unerring, My plans embrace an infinite sphere; you are a creature wandering in a bye corner of nature, and do *you* complain that you cannot walk that mysterious circle in which I move, and comprehend the majesty of My designs? Go and be satisfied that thou art man, and that I am God.' Thus, He who knows our frame, can pour the balm of divine consolation into every wounded spirit, for He wounds that He may heal, and smites that He may bind up the broken hearted. Those therefore in every age who, in accordance with the arrangements of covenant loving-kindness are chosen by the grace of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, are urged by the very afflictions, or it may be by the temptations, wherewith they are visited, to redeem the time.

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Let me, in conclusion, affectionately urge all who hear me this evening, devoutly to contemplate this subject in the relation which it bears to their own interest and duty, so that while it is called to-day, they may be led to give heed to the one thing needful. Whether, my dear hearers, you are now young or old, or in the meridian of life, the dark shadow of death is upon your path. As at the commencement of another year, we look back through the vista of the irrecoverable past, and are reminded of its Sabbaths, and sacraments, and sermons, its mercies, and privileges, and sins, its days of joy, and of sorrow, of light and of darkness, of gathering and of scattering, now numbered with the things that were; a remembrance of these days may be engraven on the memory—as with an iron pen and lead on the rock forever—but they themselves like our loved and lost, cannot be brought back, they are gone,—gone, never to return. Friends, relatives, and acquaintances, members of our own family circles, those who resided with us under the same roof, and with whom we were connected by the dearest and tenderest ties, members of the same congregation, with whom we have been often and long associated in the worship of our father's God, and with whom we have taken sweet counsel as we

went to the house of God in company—the lambs of the flock too—the lovely flowers of our homes and hearts—the faded blossoms of our sunny hopes—all, all have been removed by the relentless stroke of death. Their dust moulders among the clods of the valley, beneath the withered leaves of autumn or the drifting snows of winter: they shall no more be seen amongst us, and the habitations and the seats which once knew them shall know them no more. Is this your or my sorrow? Then “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.”

“There is a reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

“Shall I have naught that is fair?” saith he,
Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again!

Death gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

“My Lord hath need of these flowrets gay,”
The reaper said, and smiled,
Dear tokens of the earth are they,
When He was once a child.

And the mother gave in tears and pains
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she would find them all again,
In the fields of light above.”

Dear hearers, we too must die. To some of us that event, so certain and yet so uncertain, may be further removed than from others, but sooner or later the appointed time will come, for death as the penalty of sin is the common law under which all the members of the human family are placed. As then the flight of time is so rapid, as diseases are so numerous, as accidents are so common, as sudden visitations are so frequent, as the king of terrors is leaving everywhere so many traces of his operations, darkening many a house with his shadow, and causing the mourners from day to day to go about our streets, let each of us listen to the precepts of inspiration, combined as these are with the warnings of Providence, and endeavour to improve the

privileges and advantages we enjoy during the short time of our sojourn here on earth, in preparing for the glories and felicities of heaven. Let those whose grey hairs remind them of advancing years and a near eternity, be satisfied with nothing less, in this the day of their merciful visitation, than an assurance of their reconciliation to God. Let parents make their children early acquainted with the doctrines and duties of christianity, teaching them in the years of tender sensibility, that He, the holy child Jesus, who, when on earth, said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," is still worthy of their love. Let parents, both by precept and example, teach their offspring to redeem the time. Let the young give heed to the all-important concerns of eternity, and pray for deliverance from the snares and temptations to which they are exposed in these evil days. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee honour when thou dost embrace her." Finally, let me exhort you individually, whatever your age, condition, or circumstances may be, to remember that a saving interest in Jesus Christ, the Conqueror of death, who now lives and reigns for evermore, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to reveal and glorify Him, can alone prepare you for serving God in life, can alone enable you to meet and overcome the last enemy, when death itself shall be swallowed up in victory! "See, then, that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Now, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God even our Father, who hath loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work. For "Behold, now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation." AMEN.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF KNOX.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING IN SAINT JOHN, ON THE TRICENTENARY
OF THE DEATH OF JOHN KNOX, NOVEMBER, 1872.

THE name of the illustrious Scottish Reformer is familiar to us all as a household word. And we are met this evening, in a province far away from that land which has been baptized with the blood of so many martyrs, three hundred years after his death, to do honour to his memory, to wreath another garland on his immortal brow, and to testify in this large and respectable assembly our admiration of the man, our interest in his labours, and our devoted attachment to those great evangelical principles for which, in a singularly eventful crisis of this world's history, he so nobly contended.

Christianity, as we are taught to believe from civil and sacred history, early shed its light on the British Isles. In the progress of years, however, it felt the blighting influence of the Man of Sin; and for many long and weary centuries a thick and fearful darkness, worse than Egyptian, brooded over all the kingdoms of the world. Still, in such dark and cloudy times, God did not leave himself without some faithful witnesses, and even during the long night of the middle ages there were those in various parts of the world, such as the followers of Wickliffe in Britain, of Huss in Bohemia, the poor persecuted Waldenses in their Alpine hills and valleys in the south of France, the Culdees in Scotland, and the Lollards in Germany and elsewhere, who kept the word of their testimony, displaying a banner for the truth, and rejoicing in the consolation and hopes of the gospel. But these witnesses, now that the Papal power was in the zenith of its glory, were comparatively few, and lost, to a considerable extent, to human observation amidst the desolations of a world lying in wickedness.

A colossal politico-religious system had been growing up for centuries, and the Bishops of Rome claiming all rule and power as the representatives of what men were taught to regard as the Universal Church, achieved a world-wide

dominion, and asserted their right to depose kings, divide kingdoms, and even allot the undiscovered regions of the globe according to the sovereign will of the Vatican. Thus Europe, during the centuries which immediately preceded the Reformation, was in a state of deplorable ignorance and superstition. The government of the Church, so called, was impiously usurped by a worldly hierarchy under the Pope as universal Bishop, who, claiming to be the legitimate successor of the fisherman Apostle, falsely regarded as the first Bishop of Rome, arrogated to himself a supreme and infallible authority in civil and ecclesiastical matters, over the bodies and the souls of men.

Such an unhallowed claim could not be admitted by any people unless they were in a condition of mind to yield a tame and blind submission to whatever he might be pleased to dictate. At the time to which we refer, the administrator of the government of Papal Rome assumed too, as the Vicar of Christ and viceregent of Jehovah upon earth, the perfections and the titles which belong to God, whilst the adoration of images, the worship of saints and angels, offering prayer to and for the departed, purgatory, penance, the celibacy of the clergy, auricular confession, transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass, formed essential parts of that system which was the prevailing religion for more than a thousand years.

Thus, under the patronage of the Pope, who, as the supposed successor of Peter and Rock of the Church, exalted himself above the Most High, monarchs were dethroned, kings compelled to perform the most humiliating acts of penance, even to hold his stirrup and kiss his toe! Thus one man, and he an Italian priest, swayed the temporal as well as the spiritual sword, and tyrannized over the rights and liberties of those who were entire strangers to that religion which brings deliverance to the captives, and breaks every yoke, unless that which itself imposes. Thus *while men slept* the enemy sowed his tares.

The Apostle says, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of this world, and not after Christ"—and as if to justify and apply the warning—the See of Rome withheld the Bible from the people, and while the canons, and decrees, and councils of Popes and Bishops were received with implicit veneration and regard, that blessed book which is the Magna Charta of our liberties—that book which contains the wonderful story of God's mercy to guilty man, was

hidden in the monasteries and nunneries by an intolerant and tyrannical priesthood, and the people were taught to believe, or tortured for not believing, that the Church was the only intallible interpreter of the mind of God. In this way doctrines and practices were adopted as bearing the seal of divine authority which were diametrically opposed to the Sacred Scriptures, and adopted by worldly and wicked men only to serve their own ambitious ends. There was no vision and surely the people perished. In contemplating the aggregate abominations of *the mystery of iniquity*, one can scarcely find words strong enough to denounce those vain and complex inventions, which in the fifteenth century were permitted to occupy the place of those pure and simple institutions which Christianity at first received from its glorious Founder.

Shortly after the commencement of the sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation, so much needed, commenced in good earnest under the leadership of Luther, "the solitary monk that shook the world." The discovery of the art of printing, some fifty years before, had promoted the cultivation of literature, and aided greatly the cause of civil and religious liberty. Gigantic efforts were now made by many whose names have been handed down to the loving gratitude of succeeding generations, to do away with those abuses which, until this time, had everywhere prevailed, and were sufficient causes to render a Reformation every way desirable. In 1507, Martin Luther, who had just taken orders in the Church of Rome, discovered in the library of his convent at Erfurt, a mouldering copy of the Bible. He soon learned from it, doubtless through the Spirit of God, that the prevailing religion had little or no foundation in the Scripture, and as he read it day by day, he was led to see not only the dangerous consequences of that unlimited dominion which the Papacy assumed, but also to put forth his best exertions to change the moral aspect of Europe—yes, to free all classes of the people from that moral darkness and spiritual death which overspread the civilized world.

"From out of that midnight, so dark and deep,
A voice cried, ho, awaken,
And the sleepers aroused themselves from sleep,
And the thrones of the earth were shaken."

As an eloquent writer says: "The Reformation was itself a vast effect, produced by the combined action of many causes, some of which may be traced to that fountain which was unsealed on Calvary, or higher yet to that which gushes

out in its living purity from beneath the throne, and some of which came in a stream of fetulence from the sluggish depths of the dark ages. All these causes combined, either positively or negatively to advance or to retard it, and mingled their influences to an extent which we cannot now accurately estimate. In time this great effect became a cause. The combined elements were disentangled; each produced its distinct results for good or evil, by its own independent operation, but the great resultant rolls on, as the ocean will continue to heave and swell in its might long after the winds that roused its deep tossings have spent their force and been lulled to rest, or have swept past leaving the waters to rage and rave over the mountain and forest and plain."

Luther and Melancthon in Germany, Zuingle in Switzerland, Knox in Scotland, and a host of others imbibing the same spirit, were raised up to carry forward the cause of God.

The Reformation in England originated with the civil rulers, and partook of the bias which they imparted, but in Scotland it commenced with the people. By the former it was too much accommodated to selfish interests, and became, to some very considerable extent, the handmaid of a lordly supremacy, whilst the latter consented to receive it as solely designed under the administration of the Church's glorious Head to free the country from an unholy thralldom, and from human authority in matters of faith. Among the illustrious men who were honoured to carry forward the good work, John Knox occupies a very conspicuous place. It has been satisfactorily proved from some ancient documents discovered very recently, even since the death of his greatly distinguished biographer, McCrie, a few years ago, that he was the son of William Knox, of the borough of Haddington, Scotland, and born there in the year 1505. His family came from the lands of Knock, Renfrewshire. After receiving the rudiments of an English and classical education in the Grammar School of his native town, he went to Glasgow University, where he studied philosophy and Divinity, and became the possessor of that high scholarship which was afterwards so much honoured and blessed, when dedicated to the service of God and the best interests of his fellow-men. It is enough for us to say at present, in connection with the early period of his life, that he took orders as a priest before he had reached his twenty-fifth year, the canonical year for receiving ordination. In a short time after, from a careful perusal of the writings of Jerome and Augustine, distinguished

Christian fathers, he was led to an entire change of his religious views, and to adopt, instead of a scholastic theology, the Divine truths inculcated in the word of God. Thus he no longer drank from the troubled waters of human invention, but had living water from the fountain-head, and he found enough in the wells of salvation to revive and comfort his soul. It was some time, however, for reasons which are not fully known, before he finally left the Church of Rome, and came boldly out as a protester against idolatry, superstition, and every kind of error. It seems as if the ray of Divine light, which burst in upon his mind, shone brighter and brighter till he rejoiced, as we might say, in the light of perfect day.

Anterior to this, Patrick Hamilton, a youth of noble lineage, was brought in a remarkable way to a knowledge of the doctrines and practices of Apostolic times, and having crossed over to Germany he became intimately acquainted with the distinguished reformers of that country, whose names we have already mentioned. There is no doubt that the instruction he received when enjoying their society encouraged him on returning to his native land, to lift up during the short time allotted to him on earth an unflinching testimony against the doctrine of the Church of Rome. A young man so eminent in rank, station and abilities, was the first honoured to proclaim in all their fulness the doctrines of the first Reformation in Scotland, to seal these doctrines with his blood, and to bequeath them from his burning funeral pile a precious legacy to unborn generations. The battle in which he fought so nobly and fell so bravely was the battle of civil and religious liberty, and—

“Freedom’s battle once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.”

This distinguished proto-martyr at the early age of twenty-four year expired, like another Stephen, with this prayer on his lips, “How long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm. How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus receive my spirit.” His death did much to recommend the cause for which he suffered. Right-thinking men were naturally led to inquire why he was burned? And what were the tenets dearer to him than life, for which he suffered, and gave such a good confession at the stake? Alarmed and irritated at the result of his martyrdom, the enemies of the Reformation threatened to burn others, till

every supposed heretic holding views contrary to the tradition and doctrines then prevailing was destroyed. "My Lord," said one to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, "if you burn any more, except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves, for the reek (smoke) of Master Patrick Hamilton has infected everyone it blew upon." Still the thirst for blood—precious blood—was far from satisfied, and although Parliament had by this time allowed the reading of the Sacred Scriptures in the vernacular tongue, during the next fifteen years down to the time of George Wishart's death in 1546, many suffered death in every cruel form rather than deny the truth. Four years previous to the death of Wishart, John Knox, then in the thirty-eighth year of his age, had openly avowed, as we have previously stated, his attachment to the Protestant religion. For a time he was engaged as a private tutor in the families of two Scotch lairds, with apparently no intention or design of taking an active part in that great movement which had already been inaugurated. At this period, however, we read of an intimate acquaintance between him and the last named martyr. On that memorable night on which Wishart was apprehended, he insisted upon accompanying him to prison, but was dismissed with the affectionate advice, "Nay, return to your bairns (meaning his pupils), and God bless you, one is sufficient for a sacrifice." After the assassination of the cruel Cardinal Beaton, whose tragic death is connected with events familiar to those who have any knowledge of these times, the Castle of St. Andrews, where he resided, and under the walls of which Wishart was burnt, became a place of refuge for the friends of the Reformation. John Knox and his friends fled thither. Now he began to teach his pupils, and others who found here a refuge from the impending storm of persecution. For a time he absolutely refused the invitation of honest John Roche, afterwards one of the martyrs, and at that time chaplain of the garrison, who with others, perceiving the manner of his doctrine, began earnestly "to travail with him, that he would take a preaching place amongst them." At last Knox yielded to their importunity, and in 1547 he was solemnly set apart to the ministry, and engaged with apostolic earnestness and zeal in that great and good work to which he was called. So famous did he become for his eloquence in unfolding fully and clearly the higher doctrines of the Gospel, and his power in applying these to the conscience and heart, that many of the inhabitants of that city, then the capital of the

kingdom, were led, through his instrumentality, to embrace the Reformed faith, and to these the Lord's Supper was dispensed, and dispensed according to the form of sound words, probably for the first time in Scotland. In his first public sermon as a minister at St. Andrews, Knox maintained that the Church which had hitherto exercised such widespread power is the *Antichrist* of Scripture, and instead of being reformed should be removed. He doubtless wished that it should give place to the Church built not upon the rock Peter, for that could not be depended on in times of trial, but upon the *chief corner stone*—a sure, a very sure foundation. Thus he laid an axe at the root of that Upas tree which had been growing so long, and spreading its ramifications so widely, whilst others had been satisfied with merely lopping off some of its branches. Those in power, perceiving that the opposition to their system had taken hold of the heart of Scotland, and endangered the very existence of that system, aided by allies from France, besieged the city by sea and by land. After a gallant resistance the Reformers were obliged to capitulate. John Knox and his friends were confined to the galleys, and chained to the oar, as prisoners deserving the harshest treatment. After a cruel confinement for two years he, through English intervention, gained his liberty. Soon after this he went to England, where he co-operated with the Reformers, and preached with much acceptance in London and several of the chief cities. After a sermon at Newcastle, perhaps much the same in spirit and sentiment as the one at St. Andrews already mentioned, and having reference, no doubt, to what Gillespie would call "the English Popish ceremonies," he was cited before the Privy Council. There he acted as his own counsellor, and was honourably acquitted. At this time he was asked to preach before King Edward VI., the English Josiah, who showed his appreciation of his talent and worth by offering him a benefice and a bishopric, both of which, on conscientious grounds and for reasons freely and faithfully given, he declined. After the early and lamentable death of the good King just named, to escape the wrath of "bloody" Mary, he went to Frankfort, where he ministered for some time to a congregation of refugees from England residing there. Thence, as we must hasten in our narrative, he removed to Geneva, where he enjoyed the acquaintance of another celebrated Reformer, second only to Luther himself, John Calvin. There were giants in those days, and what could not such men, strong in the Lord, accomplish?

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It was during his residence at Geneva, and in reference to the Queen of England, that he published his "First blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regiment of Women." This *first* blast might probably have been followed by a second, and a third, had not this woman's death rendered it unnecessary. Shortly after, in the year 1555, Knox returned to Scotland, where he found the professors of his, or rather of the Christian religion, greatly increased.

Several of the Protestants had fled from the Marian persecution in England, and now the Reformation cause had made such progress that it embraced many of all ranks and classes, and had truly become a power in the land. Knox preaches everywhere, as no man, since the days of Paul, had ever preached before. Randolph, the English Ambassador, said "it stirred his heart more than 600 trumpets braying in his ears." Knox, like Augustine, Chrysostom, Athanasius, and many in the olden times, was a great preacher, and men like him were needed in those days to blow the silver trumpet, that the walls of Jericho might fall to the ground. He doubtless adopted the Apostle's motto: "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

Whilst the views of Knox were antagonistic to the age in which he lived, he did as much as any man could do to produce a desirable change, and lay the foundation of a better order of things, civil and ecclesiastical. His friends loved him, and were too fond of him to find many blemishes in his character. His enemies feared him, while he "never feared the face of man."

When to human observation he could ill be spared from his native land, he was once more obliged to flee from the persecuting designs of his enemies, and again he returned to Geneva, where he found a happy home for three years. There he willingly would have lived till the end of his days, but events to which we cannot refer in this necessarily brief and imperfect sketch, occurred in Scotland, which clearly indicated that it was his duty to return thither, and do or die there, as the Providence of God might determine.

Knox at this time was the observed of all observers, and it would take a long summer day, instead of a few minutes on a winter evening, to furnish even a meagre outline of the civil and ecclesiastical history connected with this one period alone of his life and labours. On the 2nd May, 1559, he landed at Leith. The season was critical, for

several of the Protestant Ministers had been summoned by the Queen Regent to appear before a judiciary court at Stirling, to answer for preaching without the authority of the bishops, thus sewing sedition among the people. On the morning after his arrival, the news, "John Knox is come! John Knox is come!" spread like wildfire. There was no railway or telegraph communication in those days, yet each man told his neighbours, and what was good tidings to some and very unpleasant news to others travelled quickly round.

The Protestants from all parts of the kingdom gathered around their pastors, and Knox hastened to join them in Perth, on their way to Stirling, there to stand or fall with his brethren. The Queen was seized with alarming fears, and, through Erskine of Dun, sent word that she would stop proceedings if those cited would stay away. The Reformers in good faith accepted the message as a release from every obligation, as we might say, to put in an appearance. Notwithstanding this, for *not* appearing on the day named they were pronounced outlaws, and all persons were forbidden, under pain of punishment for rebellion, "to assist, comfort, relieve, or in any way maintain them." Erskine privately hastened to Stirling to make the Reformers acquainted with what had transpired, and they, like himself, were indignant at this base conduct, so far beneath Royal dignity. Some one to go first was needed at this emergency, and John Knox, so stern, and bold, and uncompromising—John Knox, the patriot, philanthropist, Christian, and preacher, was the right man in the right place. At this time he preached his famous sermon on Idol worship and the Mass. After the audience had quietly dispersed a few loitered behind as might be expected, for they had heard in the High Church of Perth many strange things that day. A priest wishing, perhaps, to shew his contempt for the doctrines delivered, prepared to celebrate mass by uncovering a rich altar piece decorated with images. A boy having uttered some expressions of dissatisfaction was struck by the priest, and the boy retaliated, as naughty boys sometimes will do, by throwing a stone, which struck the altar piece and broke at least *one* of the images. This stone operates like the famous cutty stool of Janet Geddis. The noise within soon collected a mob without the Church. Thereupon, in despite of all that magistrates or ministers could do, "the rascal multitude," as Knox himself designates them in his history, flew by a sudden and irresistible

impulse upon the monasteries of the city. The Queen was exceedingly enraged and hastened to the scene of the commotion, now civil as well as ecclesiastical. She swore that she would cut off from Perth every man, woman, and child, and "that she would drive a ploughshare over it and sow it with salt." The Reformers gathered from all quarters to that city. Reinforcements from Ayr alone numbered two thousand five hundred. From this time Knox and the Lords of "the congregation," as the Reformers had long since been called, went on from victory to victory. The day of small things was past. That *ignorance is the mother of devotion* was no part of the creed of the men of these stirring times. No civil commotion could stay the general enlightenment of the human mind. Dagon must fall before the ark of the Lord. As well might Canute, the King of England, place his throne before the sea and command it to roll back its advancing waves, as well might Xerxes chain the Hellespont, as that any puny efforts of those who had set themselves against the great men even the princes of His people, could stay the current of human mind or oppose the progress of divine truth. Now as they had done once before, as the Waldenses and Albigenses had often done, and as England, Scotland, and Ireland did by Solemn League in after days, still to be remembered with gratitude, they entered into their second solemn National Covenant for mutual defence in the maintenance of the Gospel. The example of our ancestors at these and other times memorable in the history of Christianity, in strengthening themselves by *confederation*, lays posterity professing their principles, though far distant from the mother land, under an obligation to be jealous of innovation, and not only to ask for a knowledge of the good old way, but to desire steadfastness in the good old paths. "That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children."

A greatly respected Wesleyan minister, I had almost said Bishop, remarked to me a very few days ago in the presence of the esteemed pastor of the Church where we are now met, that "if John Wesley were to return to this earth he would doubtless be ashamed of many who call themselves his children." May we not with humility and regret adopt with as much propriety the same remark in reference to many who claim near kin with John Knox and the first Reformation. And if the scattered ashes of those who died at the

stake, in the fire, and on the scaffold, were embodied again and reanimated as living men, how would they encourage us to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to and the freedom once purchased for the Saints. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."⁴

But I must conclude, and leave younger *Bishops* to carry on and carry out the thread of my discourse. Now, then, from such causes and under such circumstances as we have referred to, the master builders of the Scottish Israel were enabled to build their altar to the Lord God of Sabaoth, and to keep the banner of holy freedom displayed on their native hills till the time of deliverance came from God to His Church. Shortly the government of all the Churches of the Reformation, except the English, was substantially Presbyterian. The foundation of the whole ecclesiastical fabric is the sole Headship of Christ as King in his own house. And John Knox lived to see the Popish Synod dissolved—the government of the country pass into the hands of the Reformers, and a Confession of Faith containing their doctrines established by law. He lived after the deposition by the nobles, to see the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, widow of James V., whose vacillating character had done much to succour those opposed to the Reformation, deposed, and to hear of her death. He lived to see arise, as a Phoenix from the ashes of her martyrs and confessors, a Church comparatively *beautiful as Tirzah and comely as Jerusalem*,—when more than three hundred years ago there met at Edinburgh, on the 20th December, 1560, "to consult upon those things which are to forward God's glory and the weal of His Kirk," the first General Assembly of the Reformed Church of Scotland.

"Walk about Zion and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces that ye may tell it to the generation following."

"Pray that Jerusalem may have
Peace and felicity,
Let them that love thee and thy peace
Have still prosperity.

Now for my friends' and brethren's sake,
Peace be on thee I'll say,
And for the house of God our Lord
I'll seek thy good away."

THE HISTORICAL POSITION
OF THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.
A SKETCH.

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask the father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."—
DEUT. xxxii. 7.

THOSE acquainted with the early civil and sacred history of the British Isles are aware that the period from 1638 to 1649 was peculiarly eventful in Scotland. In the first-mentioned year it came to be painfully felt by the great and good men of that generation, that a series of innovations, civil and ecclesiastical, had been allowed, and that these, if continued, were likely to do away altogether with precious reformation attainments which had respect to the purity, increase, and edification of the Church of Christ. When the heart of Scotland was moved by the efforts which were thus made to subvert her spiritual independence and destroy the religious institutions of the land, multitudes were made willing in that day of Divine power to come forward with one spirit and one mind to set their fettered Kirk and country free. Alexander Henderson, a minister from Fifeshire, and the John Knox of that period, was the leader of this noble band raised up in the Providence of God to carry forward that movement which issued in the representatives of the Church and people of Scotland renewing, on the 28th February, 1638, at Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, their public National Covenant, as specially prepared and adapted to present circumstances. Before the end of April, we are told there were very few parishes in which this federal bond had not been signed by all of competent age and character. This great event was followed in the same year by an assertion of the intrinsic spiritual independence of the Church under her only King and Head,

when the famous Assembly which met at Glasgow, with the same Alexander Henderson for Moderator, continued to sit and transact business of vital importance after it had been formally dissolved by the King's commissioner. We can in this connection only refer to the Solemn League and Covenant, shortly afterwards entered into by Scotland in concert with England and Ireland, for the maintenance and defence of all civil and sacred rights and privileges, and "to bring the Church of God to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, doctrine, worship, and order, according to the Word of God." "A document," says Hetherington, the candid historian of the Church of Scotland, "which we may be pardoned for terming the noblest in its essential nature and principles of all that are recorded amongst the international transactions of the world. . . . The great principles of that sacred bond are those of the Bible itself." The General Assembly of 1643, thus received it, "We all with one voice approve and adopt the same, as the most powerful means, by the blessing of God, for settling and preserving the true Protestant religion with peace in his Majesty's dominion, and propagating the same to other nations."

This League was accepted, sworn to and subscribed by the English Parliament and the never-to-be-forgotten Assembly of English Divines, with commissioners from Scotland, which met at Westminster, and prepared, during five years of arduous labour, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, larger and shorter, the form of Church government, and the Directory for public worship. These scriptural deeds of Ecclesiastical polity were afterwards sanctioned by civil authority, ratified by divers acts of Assembly, as subordinate standards of doctrine, discipline, worship and government, as parts of the covenanted uniformity, and as agreeable to the Word of God. It appears, likewise, that a metrical version of the Psalms, still used as a *Liturgy*, as it may be designated, in our Churches, was prepared under the direction of this Assembly. The Psalms of David, as they are called, contain, as we believe, the very substance of true devotion, and are suited to the ever-varying necessities of man's spiritual being. Human compositions at the best can be no better than the image; and image worship, though very popular and prevalent, savours too much of Antichrist to be acceptable to God or profitable to man. These divinely-inspired and divinely-appointed Psalms were assuredly given

to the Church to be used in her worship, and that authority was never withdrawn by the great Law-giver; we believe, therefore, that whether chanted in a prose version, as they were among the ancient people of God, and very generally among the primitive Christians, or set to music and sung as in more modern times, they, to the exclusion of all uninspired compositions, are the only *Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs* of divine authority in the worship of God.

But to proceed, such was the testimony for truth held by the Church during the years referred to, familiarly known as the period of the Second Reformation, and our Churches and our people professedly adhere still to the attainments of the Church of Scotland in these her purest and best days.

Passing over the protectorate of Cromwell there is an intermediate period from 1660 to 1688, and during the tyrannical reigns of Charles the Second, and his brother, James the Second, to which we shall now hastily allude. The former, after a banishment of twelve years, was restored and crowned at Scone—the Marquis of Argyle, to whom we shall presently refer, putting the crown upon his head.

Having assumed power in all civil and ecclesiastical matters, he soon discovered that "Presbyterianism was not a religion for a gentleman." These same covenants to which we have just referred were authoritatively denounced as unlawful and seditious, and actually burnt by the hands of the common executioner. Thus the carved work of the Presbyterian sanctuary, built "according to the pattern shewn in the mount," was broken and undone. Three hundred ministers were driven from their congregations in one day, and wicked worthless Erastian hirelings settled over their flocks. From the cruel martyrdom of the Marquis of Argyle and the Rev. James Guthrie, the friends of the Reformation were persecuted with unrelenting fury, and during the disastrous period of twenty-eight years, they had to pass through a fiery trial of banishment, imprisonment, and death.

It is true that long before the expiration of this era, a state *indulgence* was granted, and by it Royal permission was given to Presbyterian ministers to exercise the functions of their office on condition that the Government or Privy Council should have the power to appoint them to vacant parishes, remove them at pleasure, and superintend and control their movements generally. These and other conditions, such as that the highest penalties would be inflicted if they dared to testify against the evils of the

times, were regarded by the most faithful as altogether unworthy of their acceptance, because they involved a compromise of principle, and were entirely subversive in their nature and character of the spiritual independence of the Church under the sole Headship of Christ, who has an exclusive right as manifested in the infallible directory of His own Word, to appoint all her laws and ordinances, of worship and service. This, too, is in accordance with the fundamental principle of the Presbyterian Church, from which the first Reformation itself originated, that the Messiah is her sole Law-giver, and that no human authority whatever is to be acknowledged as superior to His by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. At the time referred to there were two parties in the Church, one *liberal*, and therefore willing to conform to the spirit of the times, by accepting the indulgences thus granted to the Presbyterian ministers by their ungodly rulers. The other party consisted of those *stern, strict* Covenanters, who would rather continue to endure the fiery trials of a bloody persecution than leave a hair or hoof of the truth behind, by sacrificing those great principles which both Church and State were solemnly bound to maintain. During "the killing times," as they have been often called, such men as Cameron, Cargill, and Renwick, sealed their testimony with their blood, and we are told by the most approved historians that during this sanguinary epoch in history some twenty thousand Presbyterians suffered martyrdom in Scotland for their adherence to the cause of the Reformation. They "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." The brave men who survived all this persecution for righteousness sake were not like the children of Ephraim who faintly turned back in the day of battle. Whilst they could hold no fellowship with error, they, as good patriots and good Christians, were valiant for the truth, and they no doubt were encouraged by the same sentiment that the poet thus expressed—

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers."

Now, at the distance of some two centuries from their noble contendings, we read with a deeper interest than attaches itself to Waterloo, Alma, or Inkerman, an account of those battles which they fought so valiantly at the Pentlands, at

Drumclog, at Bothwell Bridge, and at Bannockburn, to secure for us—yes, even for us, liberty to worship God with a reasonable and willing service, together with all those civil and religious privileges which we now so richly enjoy. "There was never," says Drysdale, "a more heroic deed than the issue of the Declaration and Testimony fixed to the cross of Sanquhar, 1680, in which Cameron and his followers, representatives of the true Presbyterian Church and covenanted nation of Scotland, disowned Charles Stuart, who had been reigning, or rather we may say tyrannizing, on the throne of Britain, and declared war with such a tyrant and usurper."

After the killing of Cameron at Ayrsmoss, and the execution of Cargill, the strict Covenanters formed themselves into societies, and Gordon of Earlstown testified before the Privy Council in September, 1683, about the commencement of these meetings, that the members were divided into districts in the several shires of the kingdom, that there were 80 such districts and about 7,000 associated members. For a time the care of these widely scattered societies devolved chiefly on the ever to be remembered Renwick, who, after completing his education in Holland and receiving ordination there, as Cameron had at Rotterdam, returned to his native land and was called to the exercise of his ministry amongst them. His labours like those of Patrick Hamilton, the first martyr of the first Reformation, were soon cruelly brought to an end. The name of the intrepid James Renwick, the last of the Scottish martyrs, who was condemned and executed in the 26th year of his age and sixth of his ministry, is yet precious to very many and given, as we know, frequently by parents when receiving the ordinance of Baptism for their infant children, and adopted sometimes by Christian associations espousing his principles. At his death then, as we have long understood this matter, those known as *Cameronians*, and so named either in friendship or scorn, after Richard Cameron formerly referred to, were all that were left of the Reformation Church of 1638 and 1649. The revolution settlement of 1688, when the Crown was taken forever from the persecuting house of Stuart, and William Prince of Orange was elevated to the throne of Britain, came very far short of restoring the former attainments of the Church and Nation. It is true that the Scottish parliament as a matter of political expediency ratified the Presbyterian form of Church government as established in 1592, but it is equally true

that many blood-bought attainments of former years were branded as seditious and treasonable, and left under the infamous Act Rescissory of Charles II., whilst by the Church itself the covenants were *intentionally* overlooked, or contemptuously set aside. As the so-called *Cameronians* were thus frustrated in their hopes of having the former state of things restored, and as they could neither acquiesce in the Revolution Settlement, nor go into the Revolution Church, they continued to occupy a distinct position, and called themselves, and have been called since, the "Old Dissenters." They held that at the time of the Revolution Settlement, the Kirk of Scotland changed her ground and practically ignored many former attainments. They, in resolving to hold fast all precious truth, claimed, and we do still claim, as regards covenant-relation, testimony and practice, to be in the same position as was the Presbyterian Covenanting Church of Scotland at the time of the Second Reformation. In this sense we never came out, but are the true representatives of that Church still. When our ancestors issued their first Testimony they took the name "Reformed Presbyterians," as they explain in that document, "not because they considered themselves better than others, but because they endeavoured to stand by the whole of the Reformation attainments, in Church and State, that had been reached in Scotland." We call ourselves by this name still, not certainly because of any fancied personal superiority, not because we suppose that other Presbyterian bodies have relinquished all the attainments of the Reformation period, but because we profess to hold fully and consistently the great principles which we have seen the Reformed Church contended for in the golden days of her past history. If ever anything was justifiable, our position was at the Revolution in Scotland, and the Secession, and Relief, and Free Church movements, all justify the course our fathers then took.

I have thus endeavoured, with as much brevity as a statement of important and interesting historical facts would allow, to make intelligent inquirers acquainted with our true position, and that near relationship which we, as a branch, though only a small one, of the great Presbyterian family, professedly bear to the parent *root*. I have done so not from a desire to excite controversy, or to say a word that might be offensive to any one who loves the truth as it is in Jesus. At the same time we are ready, so far as able, to gratify the wishes of those who are curious to know more of the olden times in connection with the early history of

Presbyterianism. Yea more, we are willing and even anxious, in the light of history and in the light of Revelation, to have our principles tested by that Word which Protestant Christians everywhere receive as the only authoritative rule of all that man is to believe concerning God, and of all the duty God requires of man.

Time and circumstances will not permit, nor is at all necessary that I should give any outline, however brief, of our ecclesiastical history since the constitution of the Reformed Presbytery on such a basis as we have already referred to. Our Church, like other Churches, has been sometimes called to suffer from division, or rather by *defection* from her established Testimony and time-honoured usages: still it can be recorded with gratitude to God that she is stronger at this day than at any period of her history since the Revolution. In Scotland she is doing a good work, and notwithstanding some recent reverses, her growing influence is felt and acknowledged. The Irish Synod with which we are connected has its Irish, Colonial, and Foreign Missions, it has a Missionary Settlement in Australia, co-operates with our American brethren in their Syrian Mission, and has several Mission congregations in the dominion of Canada. Long, indeed, before any other branch of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland thought of looking after its adherents in this part of the world, Missionaries who are still valiant, and now venerable labourers in the Master's vineyard, were sent out by our Irish Synod, and constituted in 1831 "The Reformed Presbytery of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia." Several Missionaries have been sent here since. Indeed it may be affirmed that our Mother Church, in proportion to her resources, has done as much for the diffusion of Gospel truth at home and abroad as any other branch of the Presbyterian family.

I would say to the ministers, office-bearers, and members of the different organisations which occupy the platform of our common Presbyterianism, let us, whilst we value our several ecclesiastical positions—let us, whilst we preserve as precious heir-looms, those principles and privileges which history has handed down to us—let us, whilst we profess to follow those "who through faith and patience now inherit the promises," so practice forbearance and charity and goodwill amongst ourselves and towards others, that in the sacred brotherhood of the "One faith," and in the spirit of true Christian piety, benevolence, prayerfulness, and zeal, we may, with strong hands and fearless hearts, seek to extend

to the uttermost corners of the earth a knowledge of that system whose constitution is Catholic, whose form of doctrine, discipline, worship, and government is in the Bible: a system which, whether we may please to call it Presbyterian or simply *Christian*, has occupied, and doubtless is appointed still to occupy, a chief place in that mighty instrumentality employed by Him who is not the Author of confusion but of peace in all the Churches, for hastening the time *when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. When the watchmen shall lift up the voice, and with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Then He shall be one, and His name one through all the earth*, and saints and angels shall rejoice that "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever,"



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THE BENEFITS OF BIBLE CIRCULATION,

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK
AUXILIARY OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY, 1847.

IT must, indeed, be a subject of congratulation to every Christian mind that during the past eventful year—a year in which Jehovah has, as it were, been coming forth from His holy habitation, to inflict, with His own right hand, terrible judgments on our country, that this Society has been blessed by Him “who rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm,” for advancing the Saviour’s renowned fame from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. We have heard of what as a *British* Society it has done at home, of what as a *Foreign* Society it has done abroad, and surely our hearts must overflow with gratitude for the success of an institution which the King of kings delights to honour, and which has given to Britain’s Bible and Britain’s generosity an imperishable fame—“Holding forth the Word of life, publishing peace, and bringing salvation to them that are far off, as well as to those that are nigh.”

The Bible is adapted to men of every condition, the illiterate and the learned—the prince and the peasant—to men of every climate, the untutored African, and the polished European—to men of every character, the guilty and the miserable, as well as the holy and heavenly-minded. All true Christians, therefore, love this blessed book, and should love a Society too, which, as a matter of history and of fact, has communicated with men of almost every kindred, and people, and tongue, on their immortal interests—earned the brilliant trophies of its bloodless victories, from all nations, and the influence of which must be felt to the last moment of recorded time, disclosed in the magnificent

glories of the judgment-day, and experienced throughout the immeasurable duration of a glorious eternity. To send the Word of God where it has not been, to give it to those who have it not, is the common cause of our common Christianity, and may well secure the zealous exertions, and the united energies of all the followers of Christ. But unless we deeply feel and highly appreciate the Gospel ourselves—unless, like Gideon's army, we are influenced by the same spirit, unless we have learned the value of our own souls, and given that to the Saviour, we will feel little real solicitude to advance true religion by imparting to others a knowledge of its inestimable privileges, its delightful promises, and its unspeakable blessings. This Society has been compared to the sun that cometh forth from his chamber and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race, but when his light first dawned in the East, its light arose in the western Isles of Britain, and has thence emitted those blessed beams, which will wax brighter and brighter, till every dark corner be enlightened, and the whole earth be filled with Jehovah's glory.

The cloud which when first seen was not larger than a man's hand, has overspread the heavens, pouring down on nations far from where it first originated the choicest blessings that heaven in its goodness has ever bestowed upon the human race—it has sanctified the votary of the bloodstained Jugernaut, and christianized the polluted savage of Tahiti—it has cheered the Hindoo as he sat beneath his banyan—the New Zealander of the South has been refreshed by its heavenly dew, and the echoes of the war-whoop are exchanged for the sound of prayer and the voice of praise—the fettered Negro, living where the bond of slavery twineth, has under its sacred influence been received into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and rejoices in that freedom, "bought with His blood who gave it to mankind." In a word, many a weary fainting land has been refreshed by its copious fertilizing showers; clothed with verdure and made to bring forth fruit to the honour and praise of the Great Husbandman, for it has opened springs in the wilderness and fountains in the desert—and soon shall those who bow like the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel, behold *the little cloud that riseth from the sea* cover the whole heavens; and the polar regions, the northern climes, and the sunburnt deserts of this earth shall be full of its glory, a glory of grace and truth, of righteousness and peace.

We are convened this evening to advance the interests of the New Brunswick Auxiliary, and our resolution encourages us to this duty by that spirit of emulation which is natural to man from a consideration of what has been done by Christians at home. We are just claiming that the parent should provoke the offspring to love to do good works, and urging the child to emulate the parent. Oh for the pencil of Heaven dipped in the colours of its own rainbow, to paint the moral glories of this precious Institution! to delineate its magnificent designs, its opulent means, its omnipotent strength, and its triumphant success!—We behold the nobles of England, men of all ranks, and of all persuasions, those eminent as patriots, as statesmen, and as Christians, enrolling themselves amongst the patrons and benefactors of the Parent Society, and thus going forth through its influence to spread the knowledge of the Redeemer's name to the habitations of sin, and misery, and death, that "where Britain's power is felt mankind may feel her *mercy* too." Ought we not then to cherish a sacred emulation encouraging us to labour with increasing zeal, and to provoke one another in this best of causes, that the glad tidings of salvation, first proclaimed by angels to the shepherds in the plains of Bethlehem, tidings which tell us of the sufferings, death and resurrection of the Son of God—of justification *only* through faith in the blood of Christ, and sanctification *only* through the divine influences of the Spirit of Christ, may find their way to every cottage, and cabin, and mansion of our adopted country. This Auxiliary directs our attention not so much to the rich as to the poor, not so much to those who in distant countries are perishing for lack of knowledge, as to those who are spiritually ignorant and destitute around our own dwellings, and have this heavenly treasure neither in their hands, in their houses, nor in their hearts. If it is our duty to supply the wants of those who live in foreign lands, have *they* not an additional claim upon our prayers and Christian sympathies who live in the streets and lanes of our own city, no one caring for their souls. The gospel is peculiarly adapted to enrich them for eternity, and many of its precious promises are peculiarly their own. The Bible is the poor man's friend and the rich man's treasure. God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of His kingdom. If you would remove not only the stream but the fountain of their pollution,—if you would raise them in the scale of social, intellectual, and moral refinement,—if you would elevate

them to the character of rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom,—if you would turn them from darkness to light, from misery to glory,—if you would give them a balm for every wound, a solace for every care, a cordial for every sorrow, company in solitude, wealth in poverty, strength in weakness, freedom in servitude, and life in death : oh send them that divine and effectual remedy, so admirable, so glorious, so worthy of God to bestow, and so blessed for man to receive !

The wings of time in their eagle flight have borne us over another year—a year in which, by violence, accident, and disease, the angel of death has been busily engaged in thinning the ranks of this city's inhabitants. Before another anniversary of this Society they may have borne many of us from time to eternity ; whilst here we have it all in our power to weep with them that weep, to rejoice with them that rejoice, to cause the water of life to flow in the dry and thirsty land, to shed the mild radiance of the Gospel on the path that leads to immortality, to be agents in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, by promoting *at once* the glory of God and the spiritual and eternal interests of man. In a town whose works of charity and mercy are well known to many : at the anniversary of a Society desirous to impart the privileges and the blessings of the Gospel to ALL, I know that we shall not call upon you in vain as good citizens, as good neighbours, but above all as good men, to carry out the spirit of this resolution. May you do so under a lively sense of duty to your fellow-sinners, that by the *fire* that burns, and the *hammer* that breaks, and the *two-edged* sword that pierces the heart, they may hear of heaven, and learn the way ! “ Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they shall be alike good.” Let not your love of the world on the one hand, nor poverty on the other, prevent you from aiding this most valuable of all valuable institutions, and thus assisting in the general extension of true and undefiled religion. “ There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty.” Have pity, ye children of mercy, who have not only tasted that the Lord is gracious, but whose lines have fallen in pleasant places, and whose is a goodly heritage.

The wave of emigration continues yearly to bring many to our shores destitute of the inspired volume, even from

countries in which Christianity is the professed religion of the inhabitants. Suffer them not to become wanderers in our forests without the Bible, surrendered to the reign of ignorance, infidelity and barbarism, when the sacrifice of a few shillings from our abundance may put them all in possession of that sacred book, which is the power of God and the wisdom of God in salvation, and which reveals to man the many mansions of our Father's house. Others are stretching out their hands to you, not for the bread that perisheth—but for the bread of life, to cheer their wearied spirits, and comfort them with the hopes of a glorious immortality. Neutrality in this cause is hostility. And what saith the Scripture?—"Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Consider that whilst it is your duty it is your honour and your privilege. "Lift up now thine eyes and look northward and southward, and eastward and westward," and sustained by the most powerful of all motives to Christian benevolence—*pray* much, *give* much, and *do* much, that the future efforts of this Auxiliary may be crowned with still more abundant success.

It would be ungrateful not to pay a tribute of respect to the British and Foreign Bible Society; but let us always remember that Zion's King hath ordained and blessed it for advancing the honour of His great name. Surely this Society is destined to be a monument whose top reaches to Heaven, and whose base is the whole earth, and on which every nation may read the obliteration of the curse of Babel, and each in his own language learn the wonderful works of God. England is the home of this Society, and through its Auxiliaries England has become a land of Bibles. Children read it as a *Scripture School Book*; the son receives it with a father's blessing and a mother's tears, when entering on the stormy sea of life—the grandsire possesses it safely deposited beside the *Old Arm Chair*; in so far, indeed, as its principles prevail, it may be truly said that England is a land of liberty and peace. Here this Institution, which is the honour of that favoured isle, first came into being. Here it first erected its standard and unfurled its banner, and well may all, who rally under it, sing with triumph—

"Our flag has braved for (forty) years,
The battle and the breeze."

Its operations commenced we believe in the Principality of Wales, but there they did not end. With a Pentecostal blessing they were directed far beyond the limits of *Jerusalem*. And when, with an eye of tender compassion, this Society has regarded the spiritual wants of the whole family of man, and sought after the removal of idolatry and superstition from every quarter of the globe, it has called forth in return the admiration of the world. It is stated on good authority that there are in England and Wales upwards of 3,000 Bible Societies, that there are altogether in the world more than *nine thousand* Bible Societies—exclusive of the circulation of the past year (one million and a half!) the Parent Society has distributed about *seventeen million* copies of the sacred Scriptures! Every Protestant Sovereign in Europe is a subscriber to the Bible cause. Cheering omen of that happy day when rulers as well as their subjects shall acknowledge the mediatorial crown and bow before the Royal Sceptre of our Immanuel. When “kings shall be nursing fathers and their queens nursing mothers to the Church.” When the Gospel shall be no longer blasphemed among the Gentiles, as it is at this day, but we shall be called Hephzibah, and our land Beulah! Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!

By this noble Institution scattering the seeds of divine truth to the uttermost ends of the earth, and extending its branches that men of all nations might recline under their shelter, and their shade, and eat its pleasant fruit, this highly favoured land has received a greater revenue of glory than from the magnanimity of her armies, and the intrepidity of her navies, when amidst the desolations of war, fields have been crimsoned with the blood of the slain—a glory unmingled with the groans of the dying, the sighs of the widow, or the tears of the orphan,—a glory that gives brilliancy to the crown that sparkles with many a jewel on Old England's brow,—a glory that shall bid defiance to the corroding tooth, and the mouldering hand of time,—a glory admired by the right hearted men of the past and present generation, and for which future ages and generations shall call her blessed,—a glory which shall be fully felt when through the instrumentality of that benevolence which is not circumscribed by the limits of this world, the sword shall be turned into a ploughshare and the spear into a pruning hook; the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, shall lie together on the same pasture, and the nations shall not learn war *any* more, but shall exchange the shouts of conflict for the songs

of love, and with one voice and one heart take up the enraptured anthem of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, on the earth peace and good will to men."

"Be these thy trophies, Queen of many isles !
On thee high Heaven shall shed benignant smiles ;
First by thy guardian voice to India led,
Shall truth divine her tearless victories spread ;
Wide and more wide shall flow the heaven-born theme,
New realms from thee shall catch the rising beam ;
Unwonted warmth the soften'd savage feel,
Strange chiefs admire, and turban'd warriors kneel ;
The prostrate East submit her jewell'd pride,
And swarthy kings adore the CRUCIFIED."



UNITED EFFORTS NECESSARY TO THE
EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK
AUXILIARY TO THE BIBLE SOCIETY, 1854.

WE are all acquainted with the maxim, union is strength, and the Bible Society, from its very commencement, has opened up a medium of intercourse to the friends of the Gospel, and encouraged mutual co-operation amongst Christians of different names, for the evangelization of the world. It has been one of the honoured rallying points, where the hosts of the Lord, taken from this and from that section of the Church militant, have united themselves in one glorious company under the Captain of Salvation, that they might wield the sword of the Spirit, attack the kingdom of Satan in every region of the globe, and fight the battles of our common Christianity; encouraged in this sacred warfare by the same promise that was given to the venerable Seer of the solitary Patmos—"Behold I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it." What grand and magnificent consequences have, under the blessing of the Spirit of God, resulted from such instrumentality to the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and how many of the complicated miseries of mankind have thus been ameliorated, eternity alone can unfold. We must look for a full revelation of these when the circling ages of earth shall give place to the unchanging ages of heaven, and when the melodies of the redeemed are prolonged in the halleluias of an eternal JUBILEE.

In the present age, and especially before this assembly, it is not necessary to prove that it is the duty of professing Christians to co-operate in a cause so deserving the united

exertions of all. Surely the utility and importance of the social principle must be fully acknowledged; whilst in such a Society as this, those who receive the Scriptures as the *alone* infallible standard of faith, and the *only* supreme rule of practice, exhibit to the world one lovely feature of a visible Christianity in associating for the dissemination of these to the very ends of the earth. Apart altogether from the first and principal design of this and kindred institutions, they have tended in no small degree to promote harmony and good-will amongst those connected with them; when at the same time they have presented a manifestation of that love by which the world is to be convinced of the divine mission of Christ—and of that obedience which his last instructions enjoin—"a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! it is like the precious ointment upon the head; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

This Society is not Episcopalian—it is not Wesleyan—it is not Baptist—it is not Congregationalist—it is not Presbyterian; but it is Christian, yes it is *Christian*. And to promote its objects the representatives of each of these Churches can meet on a common platform, and without sacrificing, as we believe, any denominational principle that is held sacred; each can co-operate with his fellow, whilst all are willing to lift up their voices in the advocacy of the same cause—the extensive circulation of the pure and uncorrupted word of God, amongst the nations of the earth.

Here we are united. Our Christian union is our Christian strength. We have one flag—one motto—"the truth as it is in Jesus"—"one is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren." Methinks that angels, in their flight of love, rejoice to witness such a scene as this, for doubtless their felicity is increased by tidings from the Angel that flies in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

Important as it is at all times, that professing Christians should be united in their efforts and abundant in their labours, it is especially so in the present period of our world's history. The times in which we live are daily unfolding occurrences of peculiar importance to the Church of Christ,

and God appears in His providence to be preparing the way for the spread of the Gospel in every land! The aspect of the kingdoms of Europe, social, civil, and religious, is most portentous, and we cannot doubt that present movements are hastening on to a great and important crisis. "The floods have lifted up their voice, the floods lift up their waves, yet the Lord on high is mightier than many waters, yea than the mighty waves of the sea." He has only to say, "Peace be still," and there shall be a great calm. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." It is certainly true that there never was since the days of the Apostles such exertions made for spreading the glad tidings of salvation beyond the bounds of Christendom, as in the present age, and Bible Societies and Missionary Societies are encouraged in their laudable efforts by the belief that to the Jew, as well as to the Gentile, *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*. But whilst much has been done, whilst much is being done, it is a melancholy thought that over millions of our race, Infidelity, Idolatry, Paganism and superstition yet wield their gloomy sceptre, and even in those lands favoured with the light of the Gospel, many false and soul-destroying systems of religion still continue to exist. Thus it has been with the inspired word as it was with the blessed author of this word, *the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not*. Never was there a louder call for the increased devotedness of this and kindred Associations than at the present day, and never did God give more striking evidences of the faithfulness of His promise than in the past achievements of the Parent Society. As *surely* as the rain descending from heaven returneth not thither but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, *so surely* the word that goeth forth out of the mouth of God shall not return unto Him void.

The voice of prophecy is re-echoed by the voice of Providence, and both foretell the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. Long indeed have the great Eastern and Western Apostacies held in bondage the souls of men, and retarded the millennial glory of the Church of Christ; whilst both have been permitted in the mysterious ways of the Almighty to assume a fearful magnitude and exercise a marvellous influence on the destinies of the world. The downfall of BOTH is matter of express Scripture prediction.

The overthrow of Mahomedanism—a religion of oppression and bloodshed—is referred to, we think, in such a manner in

the book of the Revelation, as leaves us no reasonable room to doubt that present events illustrate the prophecy. The war now in progress between Russia and Turkey, viewed in the light of Scripture prophecy, may possibly lead to the destruction of the Ottoman power, and thus amongst other grand and important results, facilitate the return of the Jews to Palestine under circumstances peculiarly favourable to the propagation of the gospel and the universal extension of the Messiah's kingdom. The war has commenced, and we know not where it may end. But whatever the result of present movements may be with regard to times and seasons, which God has put in His own power, we know that all Israel and Judah are not yet gathered—that the ten tribes have not been brought back since they were carried away into captivity—and that the consummation foretold by the seraphic Isaiah, under the direction of the spirit of prophecy approaches, "And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth. Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasant to the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years."

"O Judah ! how long must thy weary ones weep,
Far, far from the land where their forefathers sleep,
How long ere the glory, that brightened the mountain,
Will welcome the exile to Siloa's fountain."

That God is now preparing the Jews for their return to their own land few will have the hardihood to deny. The prevalence of Bible truth gives us an earnest that the Crescent shall ere long wane before the Cross—"that the great river Euphrates shall soon be dried up, that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared," and that the time of Israel's deliverance is near at hand. It is asserted by the distinguished Dr. Tholuck, of Germany, that more Jews have embraced the Christian religion in the last twenty-five years than for eighteen hundred years before. It is well known that God is not only preparing the Israelites for Palestine, but Palestine for Israel. During the past year fertility is said to have partially returned to its desert wastes, and all things combine to render it almost certain

that the time to favour the literal Sion has come, even the time that God has set. And here I am reminded of an anecdote, lately told by a Jewish Doctor of Philosophy, in an American pulpit, but to a congregation of the House of Israel. "One of our greatest sages," said he, "Rabbi Akiba, with some of his companions and disciples, were travelling past the ruins of the Temple, when they saw a jackal, a species of fox, come out from that part of the ruins where had stood the Holy of Holies, that most hallowed spot on earth, into which the High Priest was permitted to enter but once a year, and over which, in its days of pristine glory, the Shekinah, the visible sign of the divine presence, had dwelt. When they saw it prowling about that sacred spot they began to weep, while Rabbi Akiba at the sight commenced to laugh. His disciples, surprised, asked him, 'Rabbi, why do you laugh?' 'Why do you weep?' was his reply. 'The eyes,' said they, 'that see the house of God, aye even the Holy of Holies, turned into a burrow for unclean animals, shall they not weep?' 'Yes,' said the Rabbi, 'the Prophet did predict 'that Zion should be ploughed as a field, jackals should prowl in it,' and that we see has come true—strictly and literally true. But the Prophet has also said, 'I will rebuild Sion, and it shall be rebuilt: there shall yet be heard in its streets the sound of joy and of gladness; the sound of bride and of bridegroom. Its gates shall be open by day and by night, the protection of the Lord shall be its safeguard.' And as I have seen that the one prediction is become true, so I am convinced that the other will become strictly true; and I laugh with joy when I think of the coming glories of Israel."

The openings that have been effected for the spread of evangelical truth, and extending the empire of true religion throughout the world are most encouraging, and present a loud call to evangelical Christians to go in and possess the land. The rapid advancement in science and art, the progress of light and knowledge, the increased power and freedom of the press, the exalted position held by Britain and America amongst the nations of the earth, the facilities of intercourse both by sea and by land amongst different and distant parts of the world, the efforts already made by Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, Sabbath School Societies, Tract Societies, Temperance Societies, and Seamen's Friends' Societies, the translation and circulation of the Scriptures, from the remotest East to the farthest West, afford eminent facilities for responding to such a call, and cheer the heart and the hope of every true Christian.

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There is a call—a loud call—from Italy and from India from Prussia and Austria, from Russia and China, where, as we have heard to-night, a wide door is opened to the operations of this Society. There is a call from the lonely islands of the vast Pacific, as well as from the lovely colonies of British North America. This is the call of philanthropy and patriotism, yea more, of Christianity and of God. For there is—

“A voice on every wave, a sound on every sea !
The watchword of the brave, the anthem of the free ;
From steep to steep it rings, through Europe's many climes,
A knell to despot kings, a sentence on their crimes.”

But let us remember after all, that it is not by might, it is not by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, that success can reward our labours. This Society may “sow beside all waters,” but it is only the gracious influences from the windows of heaven that can cause the seed to grow and the fruit to ripen, and crown all human efforts with a golden harvest of righteousness and peace. We have a solemn charge—“Occupy till I come.” We have a gracious promise—“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.” “Who art thou, O great mountain ? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain,” was the loud burst of defiance which the Prophet raised on contemplating the formidable obstacles to the rebuilding of the second Temple. Tobiah, Sanballat, and others, employed every policy which earth and hell could invent to oppose the work. But in spite of all opposition, the people obeyed the voice of the Lord, and began to build—the work prospered, and the last stone was laid upon it amidst shouts of triumph. We, my friends, may adopt the same language in reference to the many obstacles in the present day to the spread of the glorious Gospel. Contemplate the machinery of the Bible Society by which the pure Word of God is translated into every language and circulated through every clime, and with the eye of faith on the promise which the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that men shall be blessed in the Messiah, and all nations shall call Him blessed, we may to every mountain of opposition take up the lofty menace of the Prophet, Who art thou, O Antichrist of the East, that thou shouldst resist the onward progress of the Redeemer's kingdom ? Who art thou, O Antichrist of the West, that thou shouldst darken the light of the Gospel and try to supersede the religion of the Bible by unmeaning ceremonies, and the vain traditions of sinful men ? Who art thou, O Demon of

infidelity or superstition, that thou shouldest strive to stem the tide of evangelical truth—the truth as it is in Jesus which shall endure for ever? Thus we may say to every foe, Who art thou? Who art thou? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

“In one sweet symphony of praise,
Gentile and Jew shall then unite;
And Infidelity ashamed,
Sink in the abyss of endless night.

Soon Afric's long enslaved sons,
Shall join with Europe's polished race,
To celebrate in different tongues,
The glories of redeeming grace.

From east to west, from north to south,
Emmanuel's kingdom shall extend;
And every man, in every face
Shall meet a brother and a friend.”



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THE SUPREMACY OF THE BIBLE.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK
AUXILIARY TO THE BIBLE SOCIETY, JANUARY, 1858.

BELIEVING in the sentiment, that *the Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants*—believing too that it is the gift of God which makes known the only way of salvation through Jesus, His unspeakable gift—believing too that it is a message of grace, mercy, and peace to man—believing too that it is the command, not merely of the Protestant Church, but of the alone Head of that Church, speaking in His own Word, *Search the Scriptures*—we cannot but rejoice that the branches of this Society have spread far and wide, and that so many districts of our own Province are vying with each other—a generous rivalry—in their associated zeal and associated action in this glorious cause. “Save, now, we beseech thee, O Lord; O Lord, we beseech thee, send now prosperity.”

The Bible is the only hope of a fallen and perishing world, and it is not strange that Christians of all denominations should rejoice with one accord in the success of a Society which has been so eminently owned of God in promoting the cause of civil, religious, and political freedom. Nor is it strange that British Christians, especially, should consider it their duty, their interest, and their honour, to give their countenance and support to a Society which has embalmed the name and the character of Britain in the hearts of the great and the good—a Society which has brought blessings manifold to the palaces of England, the huts of India, and the homes of New Brunswick—a Society not for Bible-blessed Britain only, not for Turkey, China, or India only, but for the world!

Grateful as we are and ought to be for the translation of the Scriptures into almost every language, and their circulation in almost every land, we ought to evidence our gratitude still more and more at *home*, in this critical period of our world's history, by making known that testimony and law which He established in Jacob, "Which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children: that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments."

The Emperor Napoleon, according to the testimony of a French historian, is reported to have said, "No Society can exist without morals, and there can be no true morality without religion. Let therefore every school throughout the land assume the precepts of religion as the basis of its instruction." "Better," says a judicious writer, "that men should remain in ignorance than eat of the tree of knowledge, only to be made more subtle and powerful adversaries of God and of religion."

If ever there was a time when an unscriptural system of education for our Province should be deprecated, it is the present; and I do most heartily acquiesce in the noble and Christian sentiments brought forward on this vitally important subject by the speakers who have preceded me on this platform to-night. Who is there that does not respond, "Ah! these are times for the Bible, and the Bible is the book for the times." It does not surprise us that the infidel or the Jesuit, whose influence is evil—*only* evil—and that continually, should wish to have the Word of God *systematically* and *authoritatively* excluded from our schools; but that even nominal Protestants, who *profess* to found their hopes for eternity on its blessed truth, should favour its *exclusion*, argues an infatuated insensibility which it is melancholy to contemplate, and which must prove ruinous to themselves and their children. Let the right-hearted men of the Province with one spirit and one mind say otherwise—let the honoured representatives of evangelical talent, and piety, and influence, at this great Protestant meeting say otherwise—let them endorse the sentiments which have been enunciated by more than one speaker on this subject, and, with the help of the God of the Bible, we fear no opposition. Thus, by the prevalence of religious education, all will be taught to read the Scriptures in

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their own language, and by the Divine blessing upon the Bible Society, all will have a Bible to read.

"Our country's strength—our country's strength,
It is not in her soil;
For her hardy sons their substance gain,
By industry and toil.
Our country's strength—our country's strength,
It is not in her clime;
For her snow-flakes rest like hoary locks,
Upon the brow of time,
But firm upon her ground alone,
Our Christian churches stand;
The bulwark of our nation's strength,
Is the Bible of our land.
Beneath the fir and oak tree shade,
The schoolhouse yet you see;
The noblest foe that man can raise,
To fight with tyranny."

We rejoice to know that there are so many *living* branches of this Auxiliary in different parts of the Province. We have learned from the Report you have now adopted, of the establishment and success of the Carleton Branch, and we fondly anticipate that in Portland a well-sustained Society will also be organised, whilst we have good reason to believe, from conversation with individuals in the country, that in several places Societies are on the eve of being established. The ladies of St. John have done well—they have done "worthily in Ephratah," and been "famous in Bethlehem." May He who is wont to honour those who honour Him bestow a hundredfold even in the present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. And we trust that these benevolent exertions will not be confined to our Christian females, but that our young friends of both sexes will vie with each other in their work of faith and labour of love. "Work, for I am with you, saith the Lord God." Let this promise animate us all whilst we rally around the standard of this Society, and display our banner in the name of the Lord. An English soldier, who fought in the ever memorable battle of Waterloo, was thus accosted by a gentleman who had acted towards him the part of a good Samaritan, "Old soldier, I wish to ask you one question: I wish to know if, when you were in the battle on that warm day, you thought only of your own standing and regiment, or whether you fought for the great cause?" "Sir," said he, drawing up his mutilated form, "on that day I fought against the whole army of France, and I fought for Britain and the great cause. When we are encamped, we think only of our own standing, and colours,

and regiment, but in the day of battle we think only of the great cause." Let us in the day of battle think only of the great cause. Let us think of the immortal Nelson's watchword at Trafalgar, on that glorious day of conflict when he died in the arms of victory—"England expects every man to do his duty." And let us march in one undivided phalanx against every foe of our common Christianity. And whilst it is right that we confine ourselves when encamped to our own standing and regiment, and fight under our own colours, and maintain inviolate our peculiarities of faith and worship, we may, in full harmony with the maintenance of our ecclesiastical distinction, on the broad basis of the great Bible cause, exclaim—

"Let names, and sects, and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ be all in all."

Thus, although we may take no part in fields groaning beneath the tramp of contending armies, and crimsoned with the blood of the slain—although our names may be forgotten, when the heroes of the Crimea, of Delhi, of Lucknow, and Cawnpore, of whom such honourable mention has been made to-night, will go down to future ages enshrined in a nation's sweetest memory—we will even in the time of war, and amidst the tranquillity of quiet and undisturbed repose, do much to advance that "righteousness" which "exalteth a nation," to root out that sin which is a reproach to any people, and to hasten that glorious period when the jubilee of immortal voices shall ascend to Heaven as the sound of many waters, and the angel shall look down from Heaven upon a redeemed and renovated earth, saying, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." We trust, to use the language of metaphor, that when the parent tree strikes deep its roots, the various *living* branches referred to in the resolution (and we do hope that by our next anniversary the Spirit of the Lord will have breathed upon the *dead branches*), restored to life, loveliness, and vigour, may go on and prosper, so that the "handful of corn sown on the mountain top may shake like Lebanon, and they of the city flourish as the grass of the earth."

I was much pleased with the eloquent allusion which was made by his honour Judge Wilmot to the living waters in Ezekiel's vision. Each of the associations to which we have referred is a tributary rill, but the little rills flow on—the

Society gathers them into a stream—but the stream flows on, and it becomes a river; and the majestic river of the water of life flows onward and still onward—onward and onward *ever*—bearing light, and life, and liberty, to the darkened and enslaved millions of our apostate race, till “the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” “His name shall endure forever, it shall be continued as long as the sun, men shall be blessed in Him, all nations shall call Him blessed.” Who, in anticipation of such a blessed progress and glorious consummation, would not exclaim—AMEN, SO LET IT BE.





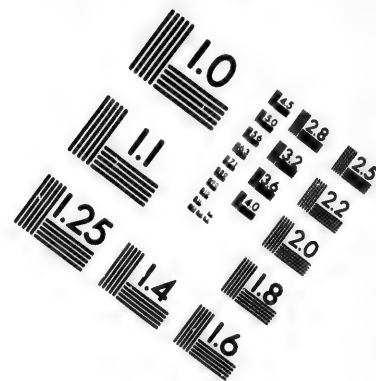
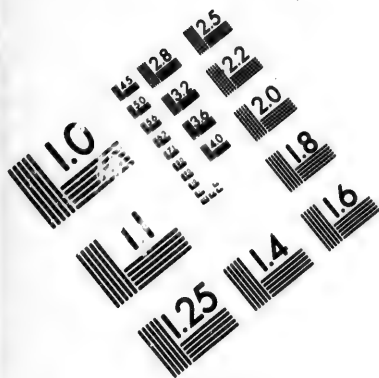
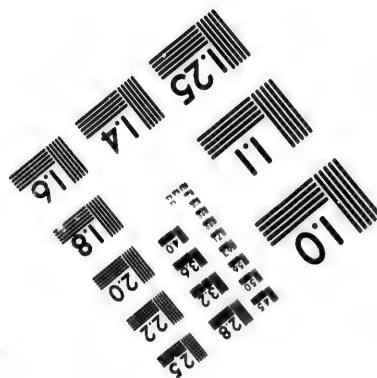
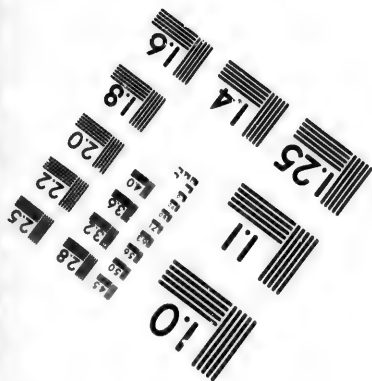
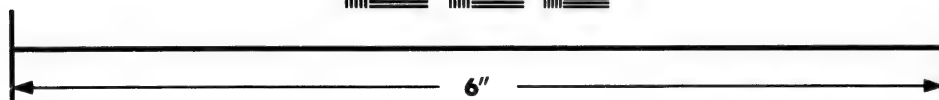
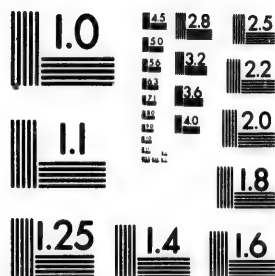


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THE RESULTS OF BIBLE CIRCULATION.

A N A D D R E S S,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK
AUXILIARY TO THE BIBLE SOCIETY, JANUARY, 1862.

THE resolution I now propose leads us to contrast those countries which have the Bible with those *in which its circulation is obstructed by ecclesiastical or temporal authority*. And this is the contrast between liberty and despotism—between knowledge and ignorance—between light and darkness. It is a comparison of those countries on which the Sun of righteousness has arisen, with those which are still in moral darkness, and have not the light of life. With such a subject before us we might plead the cause of this Society, apart altogether from those high and holy motives which appeal to man as an immortal being. We might show what it has done for his present happiness and temporal comfort, irrespective of his future felicity and everlasting welfare. But it is the power of the Gospel, in turning man from darkness to light, and from Satan unto God, that constitutes its brightest glory; and it is the circulation of this blessed book, leading her to embrace a wider and still wider range, in this pre-eminently christian enterprise, that has given to our own highly favoured land her true honour and real greatness in the eyes of the civilized world.

What is it that makes Britain what she is, *the land of the free and the home of the brave*, the model of political freedom, and an asylum for the oppressed nations? What is it that enables her to "*proclaim to every stranger and foreigner that he stands forth redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled the moment he sets his foot on British ground?*" It is the Bible. Yes, it is the Bible that is the Magna Charta of British liberty—it is the Bible that has given stability to British institutions, and elevated the land of Bibles to such a proud position amongst the nations, not of Europe only

but of the world. God forbid, that with Capernaum's privileges, she should have Capernaum's punishment. The politician may say that Britain's greatness arises from the wisdom of her statesmen—the political economist may say that it is the result of national industry—the soldier may say that it is secured to her by the prowess of her armies in fighting the battles of our country—or the philosopher may say that it follows, as a natural consequence, from her sons having made such progress in the arts and sciences; but let us ask the Christian, and he will tell us, aye, and with more truth, too, that it is the Bible and the principles of the Bible, secured to us by the dying blood, and bequeathed to us as a sacred legacy, by the dying breath of those venerable men,

“ Whose bones lie scattered on the Alpine Mountains cold;
Even them who kept God's truth so pure of old.”

Yes, and in so far as she nationally recognises this Bible, and nationally avows these principles of genuine Christianity, in so far will she need “no bulwark, no tower along the steep.” *for the God of the Bible will keep her in the hollow of His hand, will be a wall of fire around her, and the glory in the midst of her.* Banish the Bible, and you extinguish the sun of her moral, social, and political existence. Banish the Bible, and you destroy the palladium of her freedom; and it will be told from shore to shore, and from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth, that the light of British liberty is extinguished forever. Banish the Bible, and it will be with Great Britain as it was with imperial pagan Rome; or as it was with France after the revocation of the edict of Nantez—irreligion and infidelity will flow throughout the length and breadth of the land, and there will be written upon all her glory, in characters which cannot be mistaken—*“EKKEL, thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting; MENE, God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.”*

But the contrast referred to in this resolution is sometimes presented by the same country. Let us take Ireland for an example, with a recently estimated population of six millions, who are either not allowed to have the Word of God at all, or who have it only in a mutilated and imperfect form. We look to the north, and we see there contentment, peace, and prosperity. We look to the southern and western portions, and we see there misery, war, and poverty, and we ask what is the cause? Why is it that whilst the south is turbulent the north is peaceful? that whilst the south is famine-stricken the north has plenty? Is it because Ulster

has a better soil, better climate, and better laws? No! It is because Ulster has God's Bible, and with God's Bible she has God's blessing, and with God's blessing she has that which maketh rich, and bringeth along with it no sorrow.

The politician may talk of plans of reform, or the merchant may devise schemes of commercial aggrandisement, or the agriculturist may propose a better system for the cultivation of the soil, but the unrestricted circulation of the Scriptures and the ameliorating influence of Gospel truth, will do more than the politician or the merchant ever has done, or than the agriculturist ever can do, for the temporal and spiritual welfare of that interesting but unhappy land.

"The nations have fallen and thou still art young,
Thy sun is but rising when others have set,
And though slavery's cloud o'er thy morning has hung
The full noon of freedom shall beam round thee yet."

But again, if we look to those countries under the influence of Mahommedanism, or Judaism, or Paganism, or Idolatry, we see their inhabitants bound hand and foot by the chains of despotic power. If, again, we look to those countries which are under the influence of that system which calls itself Christianity, but is not—a system whose adherents have often shed the blood of God's saints—a system whose head has anathematized Bible Societies as "pestilential abominations"—a system which keeps the mind in ignorance, whose throne is tyranny and whose sceptre is oppression—a system *whose coming*, according to the Word of God, *is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*—a system which has prevailed, and I believe is yet destined to prevail extensively in the world: if, I say, we look to those countries which are under its influence, we see them fruitful only in vice and immorality—their inhabitants sunk in ignorance and delusion, and are forced to the conclusion that Popery is not Christianity. Having assumed to itself the fearful responsibility of forbidding the reading and prohibiting the general circulation of the Scriptures, it has brought the myriads of its adherents under a strong delusion, and proved itself at once the enemy of human liberty—a usurper on the rights of conscience, the claims of Christ, and the prerogatives of God!

An intelligent writer remarks: "It is no child's humbug—no bigot's political cry, this lifting up of the voice against Popery that is reaching you from England. The danger is great and imminent." The recent agitation, however it may

terminate, has had the effect of awakening England in some measure to a sense of her duty and her danger, and now, when taught by bitter experience that the Philistines are upon her, she has aroused herself for the defence of the Crown, the Altar, and the Constitution. We know not what is to be the result of all the agitations for which the present age is so remarkable, but one thing we think we do know, Protestantism will never be overthrown—such a moral catastrophe WILL NOT AND CANNOT BE. The principles of civil and religious liberty may be opposed, but they cannot be destroyed. Nay, they gather strength from opposition, and being great and mighty, they are destined to a universal triumph.

For our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects we entertain no feelings but those of respect and sincere goodwill, and we award freely to them the same right of private judgment that we, in the *true* spirit of Protestantism, claim for ourselves; but for that *system* to which reference has been again and again made this evening, we can have no sympathy, we can have no friendship, and, encouraged by the analogy of Scripture and the testimony of the Word of God, we anticipate the time when, through the instrumentality of this and kindred institutions, the cause of truth and righteousness shall universally prevail, and the cry shall be heard, "Babylon has fallen, and the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

Again, did your time permit us to compare Italy, the very citadel of the *man of sin*, with Prussia, or France, that dark and dissolute land, with England, or superstitious and bloody Spain with Scotland, or America of the South, under the tyrannical reign of superstition, with America of the Northern hemisphere, all such comparisons would bring us to the conclusion, that there is the *least* prosperity and the *least* happiness where the Bible is *least* known. Are not all these reflections so many arguments in support of the principle which forms the basis of this Society? A Society that aims at the circulation of the Word of God—to disenthral—to evangelize—to ennoble mankind by annihilating all the remnants of idolatry, delusion, and superstition, and filling the whole earth with the glory of the Lord. Friends of this Society, forward is the voice of prophecy—forward is the voice of God. Be grateful for your privileges and go on—go on in the circulation of the Gospel.

"It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the earth beneath. It is twice blessed:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

UNIVERSAL DIFFUSION OF THE GOSPEL.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK
AUXILIARY TO THE BIBLE SOCIETY, JANUARY, 1863.

AT this time, when the kingdoms of this earth are shaken to their utmost bounds, and when the fringe of the dark cloud of vengeance is seen in that much to be deplored civil war still raging on our borders, it is pleasant for us to meet, as we do to-night, in the full enjoyment of our civil and religious privileges; that we may have our hearts encouraged and our hands strengthened in promoting that blessed and honourable work which has in view the best interests of the human race—a work of such moral magnificence that the weapons of its warfare are not carnal, but mighty *through* God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan.

It is from year to year a matter of continued gratitude that so much is being done, both at home and abroad, for the spread of the Gospel; and we doubt not that the combined and systematic efforts which are being put forth by this and kindred institutions will, through the Divine blessing, speedily introduce that happy period of millennial glory, foretold in ancient prophecy and secured by ancient promise, when, in answer to our too long straitened prayers, the renovating Spirit shall descend as rain upon the mown grass, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

If, on the discovery of the New World by Columbus, the men of that generation congratulated one another on having lived at such a period, what greater reason have we to rejoice that our lot is cast not in the fifteenth but in the nineteenth century of the world's history, adorned as it is by Bible, Missionary, Tract and Sabbath School Societies, Christian Associations, Orphan Asylums, Ragged Schools,

Reform Societies, and many other excellent institutions, which so eminently promote the moral, social, and spiritual welfare of the sinful children of men.

The extensive circulation of the Word of God is, however, a privilege which has *especially* distinguished the present age. For the last sixty years—since we may say the establishment of the parent society in 1804—Christianity has been extending its operations with unprecedented success, so that now, it is supposed, the records of inspired truth are rendered accessible to about three fifths, or six hundred millions, of the human family. Within this period, too, Missionary societies, with a zeal worthy of the cause in which they are embarked, have planted their royal standard in every unenlightened corner of the globe, so that the most debased of every idolatrous tribe may be brought from the slavery of heathenism into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Surely such achievements are so many records of the Divine faithfulness in giving success to His own work; for these will prepare the way of the Lord, and make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

When we consider what the Bible has done for that highly favoured country which we still love to call our own, we see what it *can* and *will* do for other lands yet unvisited with the light of Christianity and civilization. Long, long ago, the Romans found the British Isles in a state of savage barbarism, under the wide-spread tyranny of spiritual death, and they left them as they found them: nor, until the introduction of Christianity, was there anything to oppose the universal corruption that prevailed in these dark places of the earth.

But for the Bible, the inhabitants of our fatherland might still have been worshipping the Thor and Woden of their benighted ancestors, and Britania, Great Britain—for the world admits that she is great and powerful, sitting Queen of Empires and mistress of the seas—would have occupied a position infinitely short of that high pre-eminence which she now justly claims, first among the nations of the earth, a safe asylum for the persecuted and oppressed of all countries:

“The land of the brave and the home of the free.”

The Gospel, which gives pardon to the guilty, liberty to the captive, freedom to the slave, and life to the very dead, is the only instrument that can effect the civilization of the world; and whenever it comes in demonstration of the Spirit,

it possesses the magic power to enlighten the understanding, to sanctify the heart and to save the soul. Yes, notwithstanding the contempt of the sceptic, or the sneer of the infidel, it enlightens, sanctifies, and saves.

The truth of our holy religion has been assailed in ancient times by a Porphyry, a Julian, and a Spinoza; in more modern times by a Bolingbroke, a Shaftesbury, a Gibbon, a Hume, a Paine, and a Voltaire; and in our own day, by German Neologists, whose rationalism culminated in the mythical theory of Strauss, and whose sentiments have been reflected in the lucubrations of Newman, Theodore Parker, the Essayists, and, last of all, Colenso; but, in defiance of these attacks, in defiance of the assaults of *all* its adversaries, the foundation of God standeth sure, and the Word of the Lord endureth forever. "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables," but have a "more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treach'rous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the Gospel to my heart."

Whether we look to the past, the present, or the future, there is much to cheer and gratify the mind. Much has been done, much yet remains to be done: still the progress of the past is a guarantee for the success and prosperity of the future. A great part of the world's population has, at least, been made acquainted with the *letter* of Christianity, and though it must be feared that many professing Christians are only very partially influenced by its principles, yet it has been like the leaven, diffusive and assimilating, bringing the surrounding masses more and more into conformity with itself, and to an unreserved obedience to the will of Christ.

Thus, though the religion of Jesus is still a stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness, it is at this moment to many a people the power of God unto salvation. Already it has gone forth to bless the inhabitants of many a land; already the light of heavenly truth has arisen upon the dark regions of pagan idolatry, and Mahommedan superstition; already it has converted many of the abodes of ignorance and heathenism into temples of the living God. I cannot, therefore, but rejoice that we have so much reason this evening, on the threshold of a new year, like the prophet Samuel and the people of Israel, to set up a stone of memorial and call it Ebenezer, so much reason to wreath

a crown of deathless gratitude around the fresh and fragrant memory of those devoted men who were honoured to originate this Institution; so much reason to thank the God of the Bible for what He has already done, and to trust Him for the good time that is yet to come. We know from the word of prophecy that *Jesus must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet*. Now the Church of Christ, "the sacramental host of God's elect," is thus addressed: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtain of thine habitation: spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."

In India, in China, in Japan, in Tasmania, in Polynesia, in Spain, in Italy, in Madagascar, and in many other places to which reference has been already made this evening, there are openings for the introduction of the Bible such as never before occurred in the memory of man, and the light of the Gospel is everywhere shedding its healing beams on the dark regions of heathendom, introducing to light and liberty the benighted nations of the world, so that the mountains and the hills break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands. Since, then, God has been so merciful to us, and blessed us, and caused his face to shine upon us, shall we not be desirous above all things, if we really love the precepts and doctrines which the Bible contains, to put forth our never ceasing exertions for the overthrow of all anti-christian error, whether it exist in the form of paganism, infidelity, or Mahomedanism, and that the empire of Christianity, with its broad, deep foundations, laid on the rock of eternal justice, and its summit gilded with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, may extend far and wide, till the temples of Satan, and all the altars which have been reared to him, fall before it as surely as proud Dagon fell before the ark of the Lord; and the preaching of the glorious gospel of the blessed God introduce the full realization of prophetic announcement: when all ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; when the kings of Tarshish and of the Isles, of Sheba and Seba, shall bring presents and offer gifts; when men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed; for then great voices shall be heard in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

How delightful the prospect! Let us consider it a duty and a privilege to put forth all our energies, and in every possible way by our influence, our example, and our prayers, to hasten such a glorious consummation.

“Go forth and jointly speed the time,
By good men prayed for long,
When Christian States, grown just and wise,
Will scorn revenge and wrong;
When earth's oppressed and savage tribes,
Shall cease to pine and roam,
All taught to prize these English words—
FAITH, FREEDOM, HEAVEN, and HOME.”

I rejoice that we have not this evening to lament the violent disruption of those amicable relations which ought always to link together Christian nations, and I trust that no root of bitterness shall yet spring up to endanger that peace. I hope we shall see the good people of Britain and America, as they are of one blood, of one language, and of one religion, holding as they do kindred customs and laws, in friendly co-operation, not *against* the world, but *for* the world, with the commerce of the seas under their control, sending their Bibles and their missionaries to the ends of the earth; and what is better, far better, the Christians of the Anglo-Saxon race in these, and shall we not say in all lands, sound-headed and sound-hearted in the cause of Christ, hastening to the help of the Lord against the mighty, scattering broadcast over the earth the incorruptible seed of Divine truth, till from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, God's name shall be great—till, national judgments at an end, men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and the nations shall learn war no more; till, in conclusion, the lightning flash of the telegraph shall convey not merely as it once did between this continent and our fatherland, but from sea to sea, from shore to shore—from America to Europe, from Asia to Africa, and from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth, the angel's eucharistic song on the hallowed plains of Bethlehem, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”

“O catch its high import ye winds as ye blow,
O bear it, ye waves, as ye roll,
From regions that feel the sun's vertical glow,
To the utmost extremes of the pole.
Equal laws, equal rights, to the nations around,
Peace and friendship their precepts impart,
And wherever the footsteps of man can be found,
May he bind the decree to his heart.”

PAST & PRESENT IN BIBLE CIRCULATION

A N A D D R E S S ,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK
AUXILIARY TO THE BIBLE SOCIETY, 1877.

I AM glad to see so many representatives of the Christian Church seated on this platform, and especially glad to see the President again in his place, and restored to such a measure of health and strength, after his long and severe illness, as enabled him to preside at least at the opening of the Annual Meeting of the Auxiliary. I would first refer for a moment to the changes which have taken place amongst the office-bearers and friends of the Society since my first connection with it, some thirty-five years ago. Then we had on such an occasion as this the venerable Judge Parker as Chairman, occupying the same position as the President does to-night; the zealous Dr. James Paterson as Secretary, to read the Annual Report, always prepared with great care, and therefore of great length; for they must remember that long reports, long speeches, and even long sermons, were more common in those olden times, and regarded, too, as less objectionable than they are, generally speaking, now. Then we had such orators as the honoured and Hon. W. B. Kinnear and the excellent Rev. Dr. William Gray, in tones of fervent silvery eloquence, to plead the cause of this Society. These and many distinguished friends of this Auxiliary, lay and clerical, had meantime fallen asleep, whilst many others remain until this day. Yes, all flesh is grass; but amidst the various changes which had passed upon this progressive and rapidly improving city of our habitation, upon ourselves and others around us, this Society, which is so well represented here this evening, still lives and prospers. The mantle of its Elijahs has fallen upon our Elishas, and the Word of the Lord endureth forever. I am certain, too, that

those who have engaged most heartily in helping forward the sacred cause, which so well deserves encouragement and support from the united exertions of all Christians, will be the most willing to ascribe the praise to Him who puts into the hearts of His people good desires, and crowns their efforts with good success. Surely we have abundant reason to bless God, as we have done to-night, for that life and light-giving Word, which, by the Spirit, makes us savingly acquainted with the way of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, and to praise the God of the Bible for the great success which has attended the circulation of the Scriptures through the instrumentality of the British and Foreign Bible Society—a Society which has concentrated the mighty efforts of the pious and the wealthy in all sections of the civilized world—a Society which, as a matter of history and of fact, has communicated with men of almost every kindred, and tongue, and people, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, on their immortal interests—a Society which has earned the brilliant trophies of its bloodless victories from all nations; in a word—a Society the influence of which must be felt to the last moment of recorded time, disclosed in the magnificent revelations of the judgment-seat, and perpetuated throughout the immeasurable duration of a glorious eternity.

“When shrivelling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll;
While louder yet, and yet more dread,
The high note swells that wakes the dead.”

If that hand which feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, soothes the afflicted, wipes away the tear of sorrow from the eye of the widow and the fatherless, is blessed—if he who gives a cup of cold water to a disciple is commended, how much more worthy of commendation is that Society which is opening springs in the wilderness and waters in the desert, channels to carry far and wide a knowledge of the Saviour's grace, the river of the water of life, with a blessing wherever it flows.

Ezekiel, in his prophecies, thus describes its progress: “Behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters, and the waters were to the ankles. Again, he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters, the waters were to the knees. Again, he measured a thousand and brought me through, the waters

were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass over, for the waters were risen: waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." Oh! this is that river which John saw in apocalyptic vision when a prisoner, in the lonely Patmos, for the *word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ*. This was the river which the angel shewed him. A pure river of the water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Come, then, and see what God hath wrought!

What would the faithful Abraham, who left the comforts of home and the society of relatives and friends in his much beloved native land at the Divine commandment, and by faith afterwards sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country—Abraham who, when venerable and hoary in the service of his God, saw Christ's day afar off, and was glad—what would this devoted friend and servant of the Lord not have given to see what we see? What would the illustrious Moses, the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, who despised the crown of Egypt's throne, who was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and deed—he, the deliverer of Israel, who gave them His law, and who now sleeps "by Nebo's lonely mountain on this side Jordan's wave,"—he who said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you like unto me," what would Moses not have given to see what we see? What would Jessie's ruddy boy, the Shepherd King, and the sweet singer of Israel, David, who sang, more than two thousand years ago: "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the field. His name shall endure forever; it shall be continued so long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed," what would he have not given to see what we see?

And what would the seraphic Isaiah, whose very name signifies the salvation of the Lord—Isaiah who, from the elevated heights of prophetic vision, foresaw the surpassing glories of the last days, "when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it," what would Isaiah not have given to see what we see?

Time would fail me, however, and I dare not trespass upon your attention by speaking of the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs, the confessors and saints of old; of the Wickliffes, and Luthers, and Knoxes, and Wesleys,

and Careys, of a former age, who all died in the same faith and hope, even that Christ would have "the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession."

Surely we may say the Lord hath done great things whereof we are glad, and from what the Gospel has already done we may see what it can do. At the commencement of this century there was not a single missionary society on the Continent of America; scarcely any symptoms of a missionary spirit in the British Isles. It was then that in Britain this noble Institution, of which we have heard and will yet hear much more to-night, first came into being. We all know what efforts have since been made for christianizing the world by "holding forth the word of life, publishing peace and bringing salvation to them that are far off and to them that are nigh."

Surely as the nineteenth century, which had now fairly its close, we may rejoice with grateful confidence that so many discoveries in science and in art have happened under ~~entered upon the second year of its last quarter~~, hastens to the overruling Providence of God for the furtherance of the Gospel, and that the swift printing press, the railroad, the steamship, and the electric telegraph, have been in various ways made subservient to the spread of Divine truth—the triumphs of our Saviour God, and hastening that good time coming—and which will come—when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. To hasten it, let the friends of the Bible Society pray much encouraged by such a promise as this—"For all these things will I be enquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them." Give much, encouraged by such a promise as this—"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," and "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and do much. Do all to the glory of God. "Blessed are they who sow beside all waters." Finally, friends of the Bible Society, Onward is the voice of Providence—the voice of God: Forward then, forward to the conquest of the world, to the conquest of the world, for the Prince of peace!

"All hail, the age of crime and suffering ends,
The reign of righteousness from Heaven descends;
Vengeance forever sheathes the afflicting sword—
Death is destroyed, and Paradise restored.
Man, rising from the ruins of the fall,
Is one with God, and God is all in all."

INDEX TO CONTENTS.

—:0:—

SERMONS :—	PAGE.
The Perpetuity of the Gospel, - - - - -	5
Redeeming the Time, - - - - -	39
SKETCHES AND ADDRESSES :—	
The Life and Times of Knox, - - - - -	52
The Historical Position of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, - - - - -	63
The Benefits of Bible Circulation, - - - - -	71
United Efforts necessary to the Evangelization of the World, - - - - -	78
The Supremacy of the Bible, - - - - -	85
The Results of Bible Circulation, - - - - -	90
Universal Diffusion of the Gospel, - - - - -	94
Past and Present in Bible Circulation, - - - - -	99

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31				29	30	31		
FEBRUARY.						AUGUST.					
Su.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.	Fr.	Sa.	Su.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.
				1	2	3					1
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28				26	27	28	29	30
MARCH.						SEPTEMBER.					
Su.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.	Fr.	Sa.	Su.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.
				1	2	3					1
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27
JANUARY.						FEBRUARY.					
Su.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.	Fr.	Sa.	Su.	Mo.	Tu.	We.	Th.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31					29	30	31		

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